

*DEMONOLATRY*

by

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**DRAWN FROM THE CAPITAL TRIALS OF 900 PERSONS, MORE OR LESS, WHO WITHIN THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS HAVE IN LORRAINE PAID THE PENALTY OF DEATH FOR THE CRIME OF WITCHCRAFT**



TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE  
AND MOST RENOWNED CARDINAL

CHARLES OF LORRAINE,\*

HIS MOST WORSHIPFUL LORD AND PATRON,

NICOLAS REMY

WISHES ETERNAL FELICITY

**T**HE crowning evil of all the misery and calamities into which our times have fallen, O Most illustrious Prince, is that nothing is now so easy or so little accounted as for men not only to despise the institutions of our forefathers and to invent and contrive for themselves strange religious cults of whatsoever kind and whenever they please, but even to put away from them and abjure their very faith and belief in God, whom all other creatures and things created obey. Some of these owe their fall to their persistent and over-curious temerity in inquiring into and weighing with their native reason those things which must necessarily transcend the understanding of all the senses: and having "set their course by the light of human reason" they have been shipwrecked and have overwhelmed themselves in the terrible surges and

\* CHARLES OF LORRAINE. The third of this name and title; son of Duke Charles III of Lorraine and Claude de Bourbon, daughter of Henri II. He was born at Nancy, 1 July, 1567, and after the death of his cousin the Cardinal de Guise, 1578, the see of Metz for which he was destined was administered by Nicolas Bosmard, Bishop of Verdun. On 14 December, 1576, Charles of Lorraine was created a Cardinal Deacon by Sixtus V, and on 5 April, 1591, whilst he was at Rome, Gregory XIV raised him to the Cardinal Priesthood with the title of Santa Agata. So great were the learning and exemplary piety of the young prelate that he was elected Archbishop of Strasburg, 2 May, 1592, an election duly confirmed by Clement VIII. Unhappily he was struck down by paralysis, and the Church lost a worthy and devoted son when he died the death of the just at Nancy, 24 November, 1607. Amongst other Orders he welcomed the Milanese Ambrosians to his diocese; he founded new houses of Capuchins and Minims. Out of his devotion he gave many precious gifts to the Sanctuary of Loreto, including a Cross, a Chalice, two massive candlesticks, cruets, a pax, and aspergillum and holy water vat, a box for the hosts, all of crystal and gold of exquisite workmanship. He gave many noble gifts to his Church of S. Agatha at Rome, and to Metz Cathedral he presented the rich tapestries that for long years adorned the fane on greater festivals.



*whirlpools of the rankest blasphemy. Others, on the contrary, have been destroyed by their sluggishness and slow stupidity of understanding, by which they are chiefly exposed to credulity when they are fanned by the wind of anger or desire and other powerful affections. It is in such preserves that the devil looks for his prey, and he does not cease to hunt for the man of such mental sloth who has been led on by poverty to despair, by injury to revenge, or by the desire of something to the seizure and acquisition thereof. For by such spurs he urges them on, and then he moulds them into a readiness to embrace any plan that he suggests, and leads them by magnificent and specious promises to swear allegiance to him.*

*The atheists of the former class are begotten, bred and protected by the freedom which in our time has arisen from the variety and confusion of nations, and it is generally said that their numbers have reached a figure that is not easily creditable. But either because they brood in silence over their blasphemies and, hiding behind the cover of whatever form of religion comes to their hand, escape detection and accusation; or else because they do not, out of zeal for their opinions, collect a following, they are overlooked and are only called—a term of the basest inadequacy in view of the enormity of their impiety—licentious: in any case no proceedings are taken against them, nor are they held up for a public example.*

*As for those of the second class who are befouled in the mire of witchcraft, I would to God that it were false indeed that their numbers have been increased by the negligence and laziness of those whose duty it is to preach from the public pulpits and to instruct and confirm the souls of men in piety! But the truth is indicated by the fact that the greater part of such men is drawn from the villagers and peasants who hear but frigid and infrequent discourses, it may be even no sermons at all concerning God and the things by which a sound faith (our chief protection against the wiles of that Crafty one) is established, nourished and deep-rooted in the hearts of Christians. This fact has led many to the opinion that we should rather pity than punish such men; since it is not of their own wish and desire that they have sunk to such a level of foulest depravity, but owing to the inevitable misfortune of their weakness and utter feebleness; and that whatever their sin may be, it is as it were confined within the bounds of their own folly and error of heart, and does not do any exterior harm to other people. It is possible that such considerations have kept many Frenchmen (who in other respects are in no way inferior to*

*other men in their intellectual acumen and soundness of judgement) from having implicit belief in witchcraft. But whether it be madness or impiety, this crime is always associated with and inseparable from sorcery and the mortal harming of other folk and other such manifest iniquities that it is verily a complete marvel all men have not recognised the fire beneath such smoke.*

*And for my part, since my lot has been for so many years to conduct the trial of capital offences in Lorraine, it has seemed that there is no course left me but to publish the truth of all the prodigious tales that are told of this sort of witchcraft, particularly such as have come within my own experience in my examination of cases which have passed through my own hands. This was not at first my deliberate design and purpose, since I knew that many excellent and weighty volumes have already been published on this subject by the most learned authors, and since neither my private nor my public affairs left me leisure enough to write anything but an ill-constructed and inadequate treatise. But it is my custom to rest myself between my periods of office, and as far as possible to relieve the tedium of labour by some pleasant variety; and since I retired from my judicial office to turn to more congenial studies, and from what I have recently read or heard there was impressed upon my memory somewhat as yet untold relating to the illusions and spells of witches; wherefore I concentrated upon this as if it had been some poetic fable (and certainly there might well appear to be some affinity between the two), and wrote a copy of verses upon the subject, which rhymes I later threw carelessly into my coffers. All the profit I expected from this was agreeably to pass away my hours of ease and not give myself up entirely to sloth and laziness. But at last, yielding to considerable encouragement, and being provided with the necessary leisure by the pestilence which was then infesting the city, the desire came upon me to weave together these scattered and disordered twigs, that with them I might as far as I could sweep away any doubt that might remain in any man's mind which kept him from accepting the truth of these matters. But because even so my work did not seem to carry enough conviction (for who may not suspect even the truth to be a fiction in that kind of writing?), I had recourse to a method which is apt to carry the most weight and authority in persuading men of the truth; namely, the exact and clear designation of the events, persons, places and times comprised in my work: not indeed of all of them, but only of those which I had noted and remarked in recent years. For, as I have said, it was not at the*

*first my intention to gather together this bundle of tales, nor had I prepared myself for so extensive a work.*

*However, such as this book is which I have in the end completed, rather by chance than by intention, I have been the more easily persuaded to publish it since I heard from that very discreet and eminent man, my good friend, Thierry Alix, Master of Accompts in the realm of Lorraine, that such a step would find favour with our Most Serene Duke, your Father, with whom he told me he had actually spoken on the subject. It then remained for me to choose for it a patron on whose protection and championship it might rely against the malice of those who eagerly and carpingly note and observe everything in order to find fault with it. To have chosen for this office your noble self, so great a Prince and so near in blood to all the mightiest Kings of Christian Europe, would have been the extreme of audacity were it not that I am a man of Lorraine, born and bred, bringing out of my country's stores that which I think may be of some use, and thus as it were in native confidence I venture to beg this favour of you, who are the chief glory and ornament of Lorraine; or rather were it not for your gracious kindness which no one has yet sought and been denied, and for your favour and benevolence towards all whom you know to have earned any commendation in letters, so that it is said that there is no surer road than this to your approbation.*

*If, perchance over-confident, I dare to embellish and adorn this my work with the splendour of your most honoured and illustrious name, so that I may the better save and salve it from darkness and spleen, it will be your kindest indulgence alone should you allow it for the reasons and causes I have rehearsed above, which all have their origin in you: and although it is unworthy of your high renown and greatness, yet I would humbly entreat you to accept it as a free gift from him who vows and devotes himself wholly to you with all possible lowliness and humility, and who will never cease to pray the Supreme Maker of all long to preserve you safe and unharmed in all your many and difficult tasks, and may He ever grant you, my dear Lord, all your desires, and fulfil your every hope.*

*From Nancy.*

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## TO THE COURTEOUS READER

*IT is the custom of those who offer a book to the public to preface some explanation of the circumstances which have led to the writing of it, so that they may not be charged either with a rash adventure, or with arrogance in concealing the purity of their motives. In order that I may escape such an accusation, especially having regard to the subject of my work which has been treated so variously and with such controversy by so many authors, I have taken care, honoured Reader, to show you that I had indeed some good cause for my undertaking, and that, if my arguments should at all come home to you, they should be not without some proof.*

*When a man's attention is continuously engaged with a certain subject, his mind becomes so full of it that often he forms the design of recording his opinions of it in writing, either to occupy his moments of leisure, or mayhap because he thinks that his observations will not be entirely without service to others. I shall not deny that in writing this Demonolatry which I now publish, I was actuated by both the above motives, but by each in a different degree. For while I was for nearly fifteen years continuously conducting the trials of criminals in Lorraine, my head was entirely filled with considerations of the monstrous assemblies of the witches, who were very frequently among those who came up before me for trial, with thoughts of their banquetings, dancings, charms and spells, their journeyings through the air, the horrid practices of their carnal relations with the Demon, their frequent transmutation into other shapes and forms (for so it seemed), and all the crimes and blasphemies with which it is well known that their lives are polluted and utterly defiled. And if at times my inclinations turned to the gentler muses (as must the engine of any man who has some literary bent), and I wished agreeably to occupy my leisure from my judicial work with the making of verses, it was the thought of such subjects as I have just enumerated that, from my recent memories of them, used to beat at my brain for expression and found me not unwilling to give it words; for it seemed to me to be a subject not unsuitable for verses, which it was my pleasure to make during my vacations. Accordingly, I wrote of this or that aspect of the subject at haphazard as it chanced to come to my mind; and I was like one who makes a robe and carelessly throws aside the*



*cuttings in a disordered heap; but later, when they have grown to a certain number, takes each one out carefully and uses those pieces that are suitable for the making of a patchwork garment which, if it has no other merit, may like a piece of mosaic own some beauty from its very variety.*

*But because the narration of actual facts (of which this medley is full) is the best means of coming at the clear light of truth; and because such facts are read with more attention than fables or inventions; and because men can more easily occupy their time with a work which combines entertainment with utility: I thought that I should not ill employ my labour if I saved from so unmerited a judgement those parts of my work which, owing to their strangeness and novelty and the form in which they are written, might not command belief; and therefore I had recourse to a method which usually carried the most conviction of the truth, and so I strengthened the authority of my arguments by an exact designation of the events, persons, places and times which I have chronicled. But since I had not from the first been collecting the necessary material, and I had (as I have said) only jotted down such details in my leisure as they occurred to me from time to time singly out of so vast and scattered a store; I began to select and record whatever seemed best suited to my purpose from my examinations of prisoners during the last five years, and I endeavoured to recollect what I could from those of the years before, which I had something neglected, so that my observations might be the better amplified. Finally, wishing to find some congenial occupation for my solitude in the country (whither I had retired on account of the plague which was raging in the city), I found among my papers the materials I required for these commentaries, and classified them under their proper heads, and so I was able to affect some cohesion throughout the whole.*

*These I now put before you, honoured Reader, all duly and faithfully recording the results of my long observation and experience. And I think that you will have no cause to condemn my work, unless perhaps they are right who say that we ought not to tolerate those who abuse their leisure in terrifying men's minds by telling far-fetched stories of idle and futile matters which could hardly have gained any credence even in the dark days of ignorant antiquity. And although this objection is sufficiently met by what I have just said of the authenticity of all the circumstances, witnessed by the public records of the places where each of them occurred: yet, that I might sweep away all scruples and doubts from the minds of those who come as strangers and guests to this book, I have not hesitated to amplify it with certain similar and parallel incidents taken from other learned and eloquent authors; since I thought that the narration of other events which agree with my own experience would in no small degree bring yet greater light to bear upon the truth.*

*I have given my work the title of Demonolatry. For although their metamorphoses, spells, strange leechcraft, glammers, raising of storms, and other such portents have each of them material enough to merit a separate title; yet I thought that the greatest emphasis should be laid upon the abominable blasphemy of their impious cult, since that is the cause from which all the other manifestations of witchcraft have their origin and beginning. It is this, indeed, which has, from its very difficulty and magnitude, persuaded the more ignorant that there is in it something of a divine nature; for it is easy for wretched mortals to mistake the false for the true. Who indeed would not worship as a god a being who can at will change the shape and appearance of things; can in a moment take away life, and again restore it as though recalled from the dead; whom the very elements obey; who can foretell the future; and can perform countless other prodigies which are far beyond the capacities and strength of humanity?*

*If perhaps someone may object that I have used little art or method or order in setting forth these observations, I shall take no great offence, since I have ample excuse. For who, as the old proverb says, can make bricks without straw? Nevertheless, I decided to present them to the reader such as they are, without method or order, rather than through fear of their being too disconnected to allow them to remain any longer hidden and wrapped round with the thick darkness of silence. For I knew that they contained much which (as far as I have heard) no one has hitherto put into writing, or at least has not confirmed with such authentic testimony, and distinguished with such variety. Nor has any writer in his narrative adduced so great a number of cases as I have been able to bring forward and at first hand. Accordingly, as I have said, after an individual consideration of my examples and facts I was led to do no less than collect them together in one body: but since much of my work seemed to adapt itself to such a form, and I was not sorry for the employment it gave me, I was determined to put it all together, however roughly, in the manner in which you now see it: even as from a few scattered houses in the course of time cities come into being with crooked and disordered streets, because the whole city was not planned as such from the beginning, but grew up haphazard with no fixed purpose, beyond the choice of a rather more level site for building here and there. Yet this collection is not so entirely without some method that it has not a continuous thread; not indeed such as is demanded by the careful and precise traditions and precepts of art, but such as is usual in the telling of tales, where each incident is recorded in accordance with the order and place of its occurrence.*

*Thus I selected to write in what manner it is that men first become infected with the taint of witchcraft; in what arts they are instructed, and how they journey to their Sabbats, and the plots they weave there; how they cause sickness and heal*



it at their will; how they bring ruin upon the crops; whether, when they are brought to trial, they repent, or whether they are so hardened in their obstinacy that they defeat the sagacity of even the wisest Judge; and how they devise and perform many more effects of this sort, which it would take too long to enumerate. For from all these facts it will be easy to understand and be fully convinced that there are witches, unless we deliberately intend to see and understand nothing. This indeed may be the first and most important question in this dispute. And if my work as a whole should not meet with approval, as being too prolix and diffuse, yet perhaps the reader will find some pleasure in many of its details, taken severally by themselves.

It may be that some will accuse me of being nothing but a retailer of marvellous stories, seeing that I speak of witches raising up clouds and travelling through the air, penetrating through the narrowest openings, eating, dancing and lying with Demons, and performing many other such prodigies and portents. But I would have them know first that it was from no scattered rumours, but from the independent and concordant testimony of many witnesses that, as I have said, I have reported these things as certain facts; secondly, that I have argued these matters not captiously but logically, and have always tried to adduce proofs which are in accordance with the spirit of the Christian religion; and finally, that all who wish to do so are perfectly free to disagree with me, for I do not profess to give utterance to infallible decrees. However, if anyone should ask me my opinion of these relations, I should say that they are not far from the truth, and that they are certainly more worthy of credence than are several other tales which, nevertheless, the writers of ancient times regarded as beyond all doubt. For what are we to think of the story to be found in the Commentaries of C. Epidius, of trees and oxen and even asses speaking? Or of an olive-yard crossing the public road, and a ploughed field crossing over to take its place? Yet Pliny \* says that this happened in his day in the land of the Marrucini. What are we to think of the stories of Amphion † leading wild beasts and trees, and Orpheus rocks, by their singing and music? Yet Pausanias (Heliakon 2) writes that an Egyptian told him that their Magicians, who were very famous in their art, could actually do this. What of two hills rushing together like rams, and flying apart again? Yet Roman

\* "Pliny." *Historia Naturalis*, II, 83: "Non minus mirum ostentum et nostra cognovit aetas, anno Neronis principis supremo, sicut in rebus eius exposuimus, pratis oleisque, intercedente uia publica, in contrarias sedes transgressis, in agro Marrucino, praediis Uectii Marcelli equitis Romani, res Neronis procurantis."

† "Amphion." Son of Antiope by Jupiter;

King of Thebes and husband of Niobe. See Hyginus, *Fabellae*, VI and VII. Also Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 391-96:

*siluestris homines socer interpretsque deorum  
caedibus et uictu foedo deterruit Orpheus,  
dictus ob lenire tigris rabidesque leones;  
dictus et Amphion, Thebanæ conditor urbis,  
saxa mouere sono testudinis et prece blanda  
ducere quo uellet.*

*History* \* testifies that this occurred once near Modena. What, finally, of the seed sowing itself while the sowers took their rest: of chairs walking about and pouring out wine and water: of brazen cup-bearers offering the cup: all of which Apollonius † said that he saw at the house of Iarchas and other Gymnosophists? My narration must not, therefore, be doubted on the ground that it contains much that is new and unheard-of and contrary to the laws of nature: for much that the Demons, with their mighty powers, are able to perform is entirely inconsistent with the normal limitations of nature. No one then will think my narration unworthy on that account to be handed down to posterity, as long as it is free from all absurdity. For I know that there are many who, because of such reports, are ready to believe others which are utterly ridiculous: as that witches can by their spells change men from being men and turn them into beasts; that their souls at times depart from their bodies, and return again to them as if by right of postliminy; that those with whom the Demon lies become pregnant by him; and many other such vanities which they tell us in all seriousness, trying to persuade us of their truth. But I have no more in common with those who in this way let the reins of their credulity go loose, than I have with those who hold them in too tight. For both are in error: the folk on the one hand who reject the evidence of logic and daily experience; and on the other hand the folk who believe and accept what must be repugnant to the understanding of any wise man.

Let the gentle reader, then, estimate and judge everything by the light of his own reason. And if I have been led by credulity, to which even the best of us are at times subject, to accept too strange a matter for the truth; or if through excess of criticism, of which sometimes even the most modest are guilty, I have too readily rejected anything; the reader will pardon it in consideration of the experience and confidence which, from my long judicial practice, I have won in this sort of disquisition. For when a man has himself seen and heard these things, it gives him the greater confidence to speak of them, and the greater resolve in defending his

\* "Roman History." Pliny, "Historia Naturalis," II, 83: "Factum est et hoc semel, quod equidem in Etruscae disciplinae uoluminibus inueni, ingens terrarum portentum, L. Marcio, Sex. Iulio coss. in agro Mutinensi. Namque montes duo inter se concurrerunt, crepitu maximo adsultantes, recedentesque, inter eos flamma fumoque in coelum exeunte interdii, spectante e via Æmia magna equitum Romanorum, familiarumque et uiatorum multitudine. Eo concursu uillae omnes elisae: animalia permulta, quae intra fuerant, exanimata sunt, anno ante sociale bellum, quod haud scio an funestius terrae ipsi Italiae fuerit quam ciuilia."

† "Apollonius." Iarchas, the oldest of the

sages and chief of the Brahmins, entertained Apollonius when this philosopher visited India. See the "Vita Apollonii" of Philostratus, Book III. The chairs and dumb-waiters were mechanical contrivances. Book V, xii, has: ἰδὼν δὲ παρὰ τοῖς Ἰνδοῖς τοὺς τρίποδας καὶ τοὺς οἰνοχόους καὶ ὅσα αὐτόματα ἐσφοιτᾶν εἶπον, οὐθ' ὅπως σοφίζονται αὐτά, ἤρετο, οὐτ' ἰδεῖσθαι μαθεῖν, ἀλλ' ἐπῆναι μὲν, ζηλοῦν δ' οὐκ ἤξιον. When among the Indians he beheld their tripods and their dumb waiters and other automata, which I described as entering the room of their own accord, he did not ask how they were contrived, nor did he ask to be informed; he only praised them, but did not aspire to imitate them.

*opinion against those who dissent from it. Yet I am conscious that I have not written in any contentious spirit, nor with a view to exciting admiration or applause by reason of the strange things I have to tell; but I protest that I have only striven after and kept my eyes upon the same truth which has been pursued by many others, although their quivers have been not so amply furnished with arrows as is mine now. And if my efforts are received as I hope, certes I trust (with the help of God) to follow them up with yet further essays which no one who wishes to show me but barest justice can ever pretend will have been undertaken to no purpose and in vain.*

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*Claude and Emanuel  
to their Father's  
Book.*

*S*INCE the same author \* gave you birth  
Who brought us also to this earth,  
We are your brothers; and 'twould look  
Ill and unbrotherly, O Book,  
If from your home you should go out  
Upon your wanderings without  
Some parting gift or blessing. So,  
Seeing no better way we know  
As needy scholars, we must use  
The scholars' way, who court the Muse  
Either to bless their friends, or curse  
Their enemies in feeble verse.  
First, let no carping critic dare  
Search you for faults which are not there:  
Or, if he needs must heave his gorge  
At work not wrought at his own forge,  
To drink the poison of his tongue  
May he grow ears more rough and long  
Than those the fool King once pressed flat  
To hide them 'neath his Phrygian hat.  
Strong in this wish go boldly hence  
And enter with all confidence  
The Courts of Justice: fan the fire  
Before it flicker and expire  
Untended by some Judge too slow  
To stir its embers to a glow;  
For in these days there are too few  
Who will relentlessly pursue  
Witches until, for vengeance sake,  
They bring them to the burning stake.

\* Since the same author. The original verses are hendecasyllabics.

*Maybe this wish becomes us not  
 Who with the Muses cast our lot:  
 For each of us is of an age  
 More prone to kindness than rage.  
 Yet none should blame us if we dare  
 To take you to a brother's care,  
 Since the same author gave you birth  
 Who brought us also to this earth.*



*Africanus  
 to his Father's Book.*

*A Quatrain.*

*YOU shall not go without some gift from me.  
 If I can do no more than wish you this:—  
 No ill tongue damn you undeservedly,  
 And may your friends condone whate'er's amiss.*



## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THE Gauls, remarks Julius Caesar, in his *De Bello Gallico*, VI, are among the most superstitious of all nations on the face of the earth. Not only do they offer human sacrifices, but they have a mysterious college of priests, the Druids, who perform these loathly rites with many strange and horrid ceremonies and who straitly encourage and nurture this abominable superstition. Moreover, as early as 280 B.C., according to the historian Justin, when Brennus was invading Macedonia and Greece, no step did he take unless the omens of the sacred birds had first been consulted and found favourable, for the Gauls are more versed than any other folk in the arts of augury and divination. Writing a century after the time of Caesar, Pomponius Mela, the geographer, describes the Gauls as a spleenful and superstitious race, a people savage and dangerous to the last degree, since they considered that their gods could be best placated with mortal blood. There existed among them secret societies who were instructed by the Druids in occult lore; they were observers of the hosts of heaven, and from the trail of a swift vagrom comet or the blaze of a falling star they revealed to the people the implacable and relentless will of their dark deities. These wizard masters claimed as their disciples the scions of the noblest houses; they tore young and likely lads from their homes to train them in every hidden art; their schools were the solitary caves of the cold pathless mountains or the darkest depths of fearfully haunted woods. The same writer tells of the maiden priestesses, nine in number, who dwelt upon the lone Isle of Sein amid the surges of the Atlantic, off the coast of Brittany, weird women who were believed to have the power of raising storms at sea and of lulling the waves to rest again by their potent charms; nay, more, who could transform themselves into the shape of any beast or bird of prey, who could send pestilence and famine, or if they would could heal any manner of disease even such as leechcraft might not touch, who knew the future and could tell it.

It was at the commencement of the fifth century that the Franks began to occupy Gaul, and in the course of not a great many years the ancient Frankish legislation, the Salic Law, was reduced to a written form, to be finally sanctioned under King Clovis, who ruled from 481-511. That secret rites and witchcraft were far from uncommon is amply evidenced by the provisions of this venerable code. At first heavy fines were inflicted. Seventy-two sous and half a golden coin was the penalty



for fashioning that charm of bale, the dreaded witch's knot; any who accused his neighbour of sorcery yet was unable to prove the charge might be amerced in the same sum; an equal mulct the statute demanded from the man who said untruly that such a one had been present at the Sabbat; again a yet larger fine, one hundred and eighty-seven sous, was imposed for defaming any woman as a witch unless clearest proof of her iniquities were forthcoming; whilst if any witch was convicted of having feasted upon the flesh of children, the enormous sum of two hundred sous was levied.

The code of the Visigoths prescribed yet sterner measures. The warlock who had killed any person by his spells and incantations was to be punished with death; if he had harmed goods or the crops in the fields, but it could not be shown that he had taken life, his misdeeds were rewarded with scourging and serfdom. Such was the fate of "workers of evil and those who raised tempests, those who are said to destroy the vines or harvest by their incantations, those who by the invocation of devils trouble their neighbours or who sacrifice at night to the Demon whom in their wickedness they call upon with impious prayers."

Ecclesiastical authority now took up the matter. At the beginning of the sixth century the bishops complained that the south of France was infested by augurs and diviners who exercised such an untoward influence over not merely the peasants but men of public position and power that in some districts there was hardly a person to be found, rich or poor, minded to engage upon any serious undertaking without having previously consulted these charlatans and worse than charlatans, who not only emptied the purses of their dupes but made their lives miserable with their lying prophecies and predictions. The bishops ordered that so far from resorting to these wretches, their quondam clients are rather to denounce them to the local authorities, and after having been duly punished, the crew of false diviners and paynim haruspices will be sold into bitter bondage and slavery.

Witchcraft, and accusations of witchcraft, became prominent in connexion with the political game of kings and queens. When in 578 Fredegonde lost one of her sons, she promptly contrived that the general Mummol, whom she openly hated, should be accused of having killed the young prince by sorcery. It was alleged that he had consulted with and obtained envenomed charms from certain evil hags who lay under the liveliest suspicions of being adepts in poisoning and the black art. However that may be, he was arrested, whilst a number of the witches concerned with him were burned at the stake, drowned or broken on the wheel. Since in spite of repeated tortures no confession could be extorted from Mummol himself, his life was spared, but he had been so maltreated that he survived only a few days, and it was rumoured at the time that he was, in fact, incontinently assassinated by the royal command.

When two other children of Chilperic and Fredegonde died suddenly in swift succession, this furnished ground for further accusations of witchcraft against prominent people who stood in the old queen's way and whom she did not hesitate to put to death. At the same time Fredegonde herself was given over to the grossest superstitions, and she maintained a pack of fortune-tellers and warlocks, in particular a woman possessed by a pythical spirit, in whose powers she trusted to secure her from the consequences of her crimes. By means of these foul satellites she succeeded in terrorizing the kingdom until her death in 597. Her great rival, Brunehaut, was executed at the command of Clothaire II in the year 613. She also was commonly reputed to be a witch, and it was said that she was especially skilled in the frigid charm of impotency known as *nouer l'aiguillette*, a device which was regarded with especial horror and detestation, as being audaciously and most contumeliously opposed to the direct command of the Creator.

Chilperic III in 742 issued an appeal to the ecclesiastical authorities to assist him in suppressing all kinds of divination; sacrifices to the fiend; human sacrifices which were still offered in dark corners and the remoter districts, where the life of a slave counted for little; worship of the dead and necromancy, the confection of poisons and unclean love-amulets, with many other dangerous crafts and conjurations.

Under Charlemagne the statutes become even more definite and were more strictly enforced. A law was passed which prohibited in most absolute terms any consultations with common fortune-tellers or any inquiry from such folk as to the meaning of dreams or any kind of peering into the future; magicians, enchanters, those who pretend to a knowledge of the years to come, those who feign to be able to evoke rain or tempests or who claim that they can procure fair weather, observers of times, scryers and mediums, are threatened with the closest imprisonment until it can be shown that they have wholly turned from their wicked ways. Any places such as a grove, a Druid dolmen, a pagan well, where it is reputed that witches hold their rendezvous are to be utterly demolished and burned with fire.

When this code was first promulgated with its provision allowing for liberty upon amendment after a brief term of imprisonment, it is clear that the full extent of the evil and the danger to society had not been fully recognized. For the son of Charlemagne, Louis de Debonnaire (le Pieux), who succeeded his father in 814, and who was greatly beloved by his subjects for his gentleness and sweet temper, soon felt no little alarm at the continual reports which reached him. Moreover, a Council of Paris in 829 addressed a very solemn appeal to the sovereign to assist by the secular arm Holy Church in the crusade against witchcraft, and it has been well said by De Cauzons that in this statute is contained the basis of all future legislation against this horrid crime. Again, it proves that the power of the sorcerer and of the magician was seriously regarded as something very noxious and

dangerous in the highest degree. "Ce canon a de l'importance, car il fait appel au bras séculier contre les sorciers, de plus il affirme assez clairement que leur pouvoir n'est pas chimérique." The Council declares that among the most crying evils of the day is the terrible fact that on every side, in every town and throughout the whole country swarm Satan's gonfaloniers, necromancers, diviners, sibyls, poisoners, lewd prophets, enchanters, those who reveal dreams, rewarders of familiars, and all these the Divine law orders shall be punished without mercy. Various Biblical ordinances are recited, such as "a man, or woman in whom there is a pythonical or divining spirit, dying let them die" (*Leviticus*, xx, 27), and "Wizards thou shalt not suffer to live," (*A.V.* "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," *Exodus*, xxii, 18). It is very important and significant that the time has now been reached when these texts are legally quoted not to justify but to enforce the execution of witches. It may be remarked that a certain suspicion or vein of treason was always considered to be commingled with witchcraft, since the person had transformed his allegiance from the lawful sovereign, the Prince of the land, to an alien, the devil. This idea was afterwards elaborated in fuller detail by the jurists, and an even darker shade was given to it when the witch was held to be guilty of lese-majesty, a false traitor to Almighty God.

The legislation of Charles le Chauve, who died in 877, is as drastic and as pregnant in its import as any pandect of the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. It is noticeable too that the code enacts that offenders in this kind are to be sought out and arrested. It is no longer a question of unshamed and notorious wizardry, but those to whom any overt suspicion attaches are to be brought to trial. "If they be found guilty, whether men or whether women, let them die the death as law and justice demand. And not only the principals in this abomination, but also those who consort with or consult them, shall pay the penalty in order that the very memory of so heinous a crime may be utterly abolished and uprooted from our land."

The effect of these measures was to drive the evil underground. The ninth and tenth centuries were for France uneasy and most wretched years, a dark era of invasions, of civil wars, of revolting provinces, and the thousand bitter woes such disturbances bring in their train. It was largely a period of chaos and anarchy, since the princes for the most part were too much occupied in maintaining their position by force of arms to apply the law in its full rigour. Occasional prosecutions are recorded, such as that at Orleans under Robert le Pieux in 1022, of the Cathari, a not unnumerous society of devil-worshippers, and contemporary chroniclers record many a history of possession and hideous sortilege when the powers of evil were exalted.

Actually the official records are few, but so soon as a more general order is restored we find that amongst the checking of other crimes and abuses, this evil also, which owing to the sad accidents of the state had



so long continued almost scatheless, is dealt with by authority with no faltering hand. It was in April, 1233, that Gregory IX officially established the Order of Preachers as the Pontifical Inquisitors for all dioceses of France, more especially commending to their care the southern provinces, that they might aid to subdue the sedition and insurgency which unhappily ran riot there. The good friars at once began to take cognizance of the dark crime of witchcraft, and from about the middle of the thirteenth century a number of trials and judicial inquiries are recorded. It is true that in 1257, when the question was posed to Alexander IV whether it was the particular province of the Inquisition to deal with cases of sorcery, that Pontiff in his bull, *Quod super nonnullis*, directs that they should not extend the sphere of their duties unless in the accusation there is manifest heresy involved; and this rule was actually embodied in the canon law by Boniface VIII, who reigned from 1294-1303, but the point arises whether the invocation of demons is not *per se* heretical, and the great authority Sylvester Mazzolini decides that such indeed must be the case, that all witches are, in fact, heretics, material or formal. Bernardo di Como in his *Lucerna Inquisitorum*, under the title "Daemones Inuocare," discusses "Daemones Inuocare an sit haereticum," and allows that there are two probable opinions either of which may be followed. It is necessary to make some very careful and nice distinctions here, but for my part I subscribe to Lopus, who says, "Inuocans daemones est haereticus, cum attribuat eis id quod est Dei, per quem omnia facta sunt." At the same time it is only fair to add that one must distinguish, and in 1473 the Carmelites of Bologna held that it was not necessarily always heretical, and Ugolini Zanghino, in his *Tractatus de Haereticis*, xxii, writes that there are certain operations of magic which do not involve the malice of heresy. On the other hand, as Bernardo di Como lays down: "Implorare auxilium a daemone in his quae sunt supra facultatem humanam, sicut in uaticinatione de futuro, et in aliis operibus magicis, in quibus complementum operis ex uirtute daemonum expectatur, est apostasia a fide, per pactum initum cum daemone, uel uerbotenus si inuocatio intersit, uel facto aliquo, etiam si sacrificia desint."

Incidentally it may be remembered that charges of sorcery often resolved themselves into charges of murder, for the witches of all countries were adepts in the art of poisoning, and in such cases the offences were tried before the civil courts. Thus one of the accusations against Bernard Délicieux was that he had attempted the life of Benedict XI by magic arts; and in 1308 the Sire d'Ulmet was brought to Paris upon a charge of attempting to kill his wife by sorcery, whilst the hags whom he had employed were buried alive or burned at the stake. Three centuries later in the English trials for witchcraft the accused when sentenced are condemned as being guilty of murder. Thus in the famous case of the Lancashire witches of 1612, the accused

were directly indicted for having killed certain persons by their arts, and, to quote only one verdict, the jury found "*Anne Whittle, alias Chattox, Elizabeth Deuice, and James Deuice*, guiltie of the seuerall murthers by Witchcraft, contained in the Indictments against them, and euery of them." Many similar instances might be cited, but it will suffice to point out that in George Gifford's *A Dialogue concerning Witches and Witchcrafts*, 1593, when Daniel says a witch by the word of God ought to die the death not because she kills men, for she cannot (except by poison), but because she deals in devils, the interlocutor retorts that the English law does not put them to death for sorcery but for murder.

Typical cases which came before the Inquisition were such as that of Angèle de la Bathe in 1275, who confessed that she habitually copulated with a familiar to whom she had borne a monstrous child; and in 1459 at Langres that of a mysterious hermit, Robinet de Vaulx, which latter gave rise to the prosecutions at Arras, implicating a large number of persons, of nobles and wealthy burghers as well as common folk. Although Gregory XI in 1374 authorized the Inquisition to prosecute all cases of sorcery, the local Parlements gradually weaned this offence from ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In 1390 a secular official by name Poulallier, Prevost Marshal of the district, arrested several sorcerers at Laon, and Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, IV, 1, says that thereafter cognizance of these offences was confined to the secular tribunals. "Mais depuis la cognoissance fust attribuee aux Iugez laiz, priuatiuement aux gens d'Eglise par arrest du mesme Parlement l'an mil trois cens nonante, qui fut saintement ordonné." Accordingly, although Jeanette Neuve was tried and sent to the stake by the court of the Abbey of Saint-Chaffre, this was in its capacity as *haut-justicier*, and not as an ecclesiastical tribunal. Moreover, poisoning was laid to her charge, for the Sire de Burzet, having fallen out with his wife and wishing to be reconciled, applied to Jeanette for a potion. She gave him some mysterious drug, which was secretly administered in a cup of wine to the lady, who within a very few hours was dead.

It may be noted that of the great writers upon demonology, four at least, Jean Bodin, Nicolas Remy, Henri Boguet and Pierre de Lancre, were secular magistrates and presidents of secular courts.

Supremely interesting and of the first importance as they are, but bare mention must be made of the three great cases of the Knights Templars, S. Joan of Arc, and Gilles de Rais.

It has been said that "at the beginning of the fourteenth century all Christendom, from Great Britain to Cyprus, was convulsed by the tragic catastrophe of the Knights Templars, than which history knows no more formidable trial, nor has the final verdict been given even to-day." The exact source whence proceeded the immediate denunciation of the Templars is uncertain. It may certainly be allowed that Philip Le Bel regarded with jealous suspicion the strongholds that the

Templars had built up and down throughout France; it is incontestable that he not only coveted but feared the vast riches of the Order. Yet it is difficult to think that he did not credit at least some of the charges which were brought against the Order, for it is clear that many of these were substantially established. No doubt extravagant stories were bruited and believed in many quarters, the episode would be unique in human history were it not so. Many members protested their entire innocence, and it is not to be supposed that the more occult mysteries and inner secrets of Baphomet, the *osculum obscenum* and the Gnostic liturgy were revealed to any save to the most trusted initiates.

Even in this long series of trials, which in various countries of Europe and throughout the cities and provinces of France extended over a period of more than five years, the proceedings of two separate courts can be distinguished, the papal commission and the royal commission.

With regard to the condemnation of S. Joan of Arc as "menteresse, perniciose, divinesse, superstitieuse, blasphemeresse de Dieu, ydolatre, invocateresse de déables, apostate, scismatique et hérétique," it is superfluous to point out that Pierre Cauchon, who claimed the Maid for the ecclesiastical arm, was merely an agent of the English, and even if the tribunal before which she was brought had acquitted her she would yet have remained the prisoner of the King of England. It was in 1449 that Charles VII opened the process for the revision of this irregular trial, and Pope Calistus III appointed a commission of the highest and most reverend prelates to investigate the matter. The Archbishop of Rheims, the Bishop of Paris, the Bishop of Coutances and the Grand Inquisitor of France, Jean Brehal, on the 7th July, 1456, delivered their judgement. They decided that the process was uncanonical, unjust, fraudulent and malicious; they annulled, repudiated, revoked, pronounced invalid and declared utterly null and void the sentence, so that the whole trial was quashed as a manifest error both in right and in justice, proceedings which were perfidious and defamed, false and indignant, a perjured process full of manifest contradictions.

The supreme curia before which in October, 1440, was brought Gilles de Rais, consisted of two tribunals, the ecclesiastical court whose president was Jean de Malestroit, Bishop of Nantes; and the civil court which had as its shrieve Pierre de l'Hospital, Chancellor of Brittany. The finding of the ecclesiastical court was that Gilles was shamefully guilty of witchcraft, Satanism, heresy, sacrilege, apostasy, and other heinous crimes, wherefore he was handed over to the civil arm to receive the punishment due to such deeds. The secular court sentenced him to death on multiplied charges of murder as well as for the aforesaid offences.

It may be remarked that when the Inquisition and the Bishops



delegated their jurisdiction in these cases to the civil courts, the accused were treated with far greater severity and even the innocent had little chance of escape. Michelet, *La Sorcière*, II, 3, says: "Partout où les tribunaux laïques revendiquent ces affaires, elles deviennent rares et disparaissent du loins pour cent années chez nous, 1450-1550. . . . Nulle condamnation sous Charles VIII, Louis XII, François I<sup>er</sup>." This is of course, greatly exaggerated, and cases could be quoted during the hundred years mentioned by Michelet, and in the reigns of these three kings, that is to say, from 1483 to 1547. Thus on the 9th October, 1519, Catherine Peyretonne was executed at Montpezat. She confessed to habitual attendance at the Sabbat, and for many years she had stolen infants from the cradle, sacrificing them to her familiar, Barrabam, and adoring the fiend with obscene ritual. In 1521 at Besançon two shepherds, lycanthropes, Michel Verdun and Pierre Burgot, were burned alive. Under François I there were terrible scandals at the convent of St. Pierre at Lyons, which was convulsed by an outbreak of demoniacal possession. There was an execution in 1539, and again in 1540 at Toulouse. In the same year the Norman Parliament burned in the old market-place at Rouen two shepherds of Tosny, a hamlet near Gisors, by name Delarue and Morin, obstinate and self-confessed Satanists of long continuance.

It is true that under such a king as François I, whose pose was to be the baroque Amadis of monarchs; who was fantastic and fickle in his showy chivalry; as variable as he was versatile; whose ideal was the useless magnificence of the Field of the Cloth of Gold; whose nature was at the bottom profoundly indifferent; who took love and devotion but who gave not even gratitude; under such a king as this it is true that it was not to be expected the laws would receive any impetus or weight. Privately, both he and his mother were incredibly lax and frivolous as regards their views upon religion, but at the same time officially they recognised that the Catholic Church was of immense importance and had a great temporal authority. The brutal blasphemies of the 18th and 19th October, 1534, when Holy Mass was reviled and the venerated statue of Our Lady mutilated, were rightly avenged with the gibbet and the stake.

A very different character was Henri, this second son, who upon the death of the young dauphin François became heir to the throne. "Il est né Saturnien," was the clever mot of Simon Renard; and a Venetian ambassador wrote: "He is melancholy, saying little, and devoid of repartee; but when once he *has* said a thing he holds to it *mordicus*, for he is very clear and decided as to his opinions." "He is brave, and loves hunting and fighting; and he is very religious, and will not ride on Sundays." So judged Matteo Dandolo. And one of the opinions to which this very religious young king held in his decided way was that France must be cleared of the witches and devil-worshippers who were recruiting their ranks from every quarter, to the great

contempt of God and His Holy Mother. At the side of Henri II, solemn and watchful as a Spanish grandee, there stood not his wife, the Florentine Catherine de' Medici, "the shopkeeper's daughter" as they cruelly dubbed her, but a lady of exquisite beauty, *la grande Sénéchale*. Henri was eighteen years old when he fell under the enchantment of Diane de Poitiers, and when he died twenty-three years later he was no less devoted. Pale, tall and slender, she was ever soberly clad, for at the time Henri first became her lover she wore quiet weeds for her husband, and in knightly wise he also adopted for his badge the silver and black his lady favoured, emblazoning everywhere her device, a crescent moon with the motto *Donec totum impleat orbem*. Diane was all reserve and mystery; intensely religious and jealous of the honour of her faith, she looked with proudly intolerant eyes upon the scandals wrought by sorcery and witchcraft throughout the fair realm of France. This great lady, who, as she said, "would not for an empire have spoken to a Huguenot," did not suffer the law to sleep. "Le sombre règne d'Henri II et de Diane de Poitiers finit le temps de tolérance. On brûle, sous Diane, les hérétiques et les sorciers. Catherine de Médicis, au contraire, entourée d'astrologues et de magiciens, eût voulu protéger ceux-ci." Even during her husband's lifetime Queen Catherine found means to have continually in her retinue a number of occultists, some of no very good repute. It was whispered that their royal mistress herself was not infrequently present at unhallowed rites, but very secretly for fear not so much of the king, as of the omnipotent Duchesse de Valentinois. Certainly Catherine had consulted her astrologers on the eve of the 29th June, 1559, for early that morning she sent urgent messages to Henri begging him not to venture to the jousts. Her warnings were laughed at, and, as fate willed and the Huguenots planned, the lance of Montgomeri lodged a splinter in the royal brain. At once the Queen assumed control of affairs, and Diane retired to her splendid château of Anet. Although Catherine de' Medici may have protected the magicians, those subtle poisoners and dark diviners immediately among her own entourage, with that curious official orthodoxy which so often accompanies an irregular mysticism and uneasy curiosity concerning the future, she did not in any way attempt to relax the common law nor did she shelter the smaller fry. Indeed throughout the reigns of her three sons, François II, 1559-1560; Charles IX, 1560-1574; and Henri III, 1574-1589, the witch prosecutions were pursued with the utmost energy and vigour. Not indeed that they in any way relaxed whilst Henri IV and Louis XIII occupied the throne; whilst even under Louis XIV there were some terrible cases of Satanism in the provinces, and in Paris itself occurred the resounding scandals of la Voisin and her vile associates.

Of the Valois, Charles IX and Henri III were more than suspected of having dabbled in these ill-omened secrets. Bodin tells us that Charles IX, urged it would seem by tickling curiosity, himself interro-

gated in liveliest detail the notorious Trois-Echelles, whose crimes he pardoned on condition that the warlock gave him a full description of the Sabbat and other foul practices. "Le Roy Charles 9. apres disner commanda qu'on luy amenast Trois-Echelles, auquel il auoit donné sa grace pour accuser ses complices. Et confessa deuant le Roy en presence de plusieurs grad Seigneurs, la façon du transport des sorcieres, des dances, des sacrifices faicts à Satan, des paillardises avec les Diables en figure d'hommes & de femmes: & que chacun prenoit des poudres pour faire mourir hommes, bestes, & fruits."

Whether Henri III actually dabbled in occult arts or no is uncertain, for the evidence which has come down to us is most violently prejudiced and inimical, but whatever may be the truth of the matter, it is fairly well established that the assassination of this monarch on 1st August, 1589, was largely the result of reports which were most industriously circulated by the Leaguers, openly accusing him of sorcery. Early in 1589 was published a pamphlet entitled *Les sorceleries de Henry de Valois, et les oblations qu'il faisoit au diable dans le bois de Vincennes*, and this is exceedingly precise in its details. Even more fantastic stories of schools for black magic being held at the Louvre are related in *Remonstrances à Henry de Valois sur les choses horribles envoyées par un enfant de Paris*, 1589.

At the end of the sixteenth century France was literarily honey-combed by the vast secret society of witches, whose members, ever busy at their evil work, might be found everywhere, in crowded capital and in remote hamlet, in palace and in cottage, of both sexes and of all ages, even the very youngest, for, as was proved time after time, the older adepts trained up their children almost from the cradle in their diabolic craft. No whit does Bodin exaggerate when he says, "par la souffrance des Iuges ceste vermine a si bien multiplié, que Trois-eschelles dist au Roy Charles ix qu'il y en auoit plus de trois cens mille en ce Royaume" (*Démonomanie*, IV, 5). There were happily also many brave hearts who were found faithful to their duty, and not a few works of great value were penned by deep scholars, priest and layman alike, investigating magistrate whose official task, and private observer whose individual responsibility, set the quill to the paper. As we have already remarked, four great and honourable names stand out pre-eminently at this period for the noble services which at no small cost and pains they rendered human society.

Jean Bodin, to whom Brunetière assigns a place in French literature beside Henri Estienne and Amyot, was born at Angers in 1520, and died at Laon in 1596. His famous *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, which was first published at Paris, 4to, 1580, ran into many editions and had an immense influence in its day.

The *Discours des Sorciers* of Henry Boguet, "Grand Juge de St. Claude, au Comté de Bourgogne," which has been well termed "a book precious as gold," was published (in its present amplified form)



at Lyons in 1602. Boguet died in 1619; and his work, a summary of his activities in the Dolonais district, has recently been translated into English as *An Examen of Witches* (John Rodker, 1929).

In 1603 the Parliament of Bordeaux gave Pierre de Lancre a special commission to visit on a circuit extraordinary the provinces of Bayonne and Labourd. He has left a record of his activities in that great work *Tableau de l'Inconstance des Mauvais Anges et Démon*s, which is universally regarded as one of the most valuable and authoritative in the whole library of demonologists. The book was published in 1610, but the first issue, "as corrected and revised," is 1612. De Lancre died at Paris about the year 1630. Two lesser known but equally valuable works by the same author are *L'incrudulite et mescreance du sortilege*, Paris, 1622; and *Du Sortilege (sine loco)*, 1627.

Nicolas Remy was born in 1530 at Charmes, of which town his father, an honoured and active magistrate, was mayor. Destined from his earliest years to the legal profession, since at this time Lorraine did not yet boast a University, he pursued his studies in France, probably at Orleans. He proceeded to the degree of Licentiate in Laws, and for one-and-twenty years occupied the chairs both of Laws and Literature in more than one ancient college. In letters patent which were granted to Remy he is qualified as "licencié ès lois des Universités de France, où il auroit versé l'espace de vingt ung ans, faisant profession, la plupart d'iceulx, d'enseigner tant les lettres humaines que les droictz." On 15 March, 1570, one of his maternal uncles, François Mittat, retired in his favour from the office of lieutenant-general of the bailiwick of the Vosges, one of the three chief bailiwicks into which Lorraine was divided, and for the space of five years from this date Remy resided at Mirecourt, winning throughout the district no small reputation as a most just and honourable administrator. On 4 November, 1575, Duke Charles III summoned Remy to Nancy in the capacity of his private secretary. In the following year the Duke promoted him as a member of the tribunal of the *échevins* or Provosts of Nancy.

The Provosts of Nancy were a ducal court, senators, four or six in number, who were appointed by the Duke himself. Their president was the Master Provost, and as in earlier days the court had consisted of only two magistrates, Remy often speaks of this tribunal as the *duumviri*. The Provosts judged all criminal cases throughout the wapentake and tithing of Nancy, a region comprising some seventy-two villages, from Frouard in the north to Affracourt, Xirocourt and Vaudéville in the extreme southern marches. During these years vast numbers of cases of sorcery were investigated throughout this locality, and Remy as a judge had little leisure from his avocation. Moreover, the very many petty courts of Lorraine, seignorial tribunals, communal tribunals and others, continually referred intricate and difficult cases to Nancy. In fact eventually there were but a few independent tribunals such as those of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines and Saint-Hippolyte which

enjoyed the right of pronouncing a capital sentence without the confirmation of the Provosts of Nancy.

From 1576 to 1591 Remy was not the least active member of this distinguished body. Every case and process of sorcery in Lorraine came under his notice for examination. Even those which he himself did not judge in person were submitted to him by the amplest sworn reports. It was owing to his zeal in this function that he obtained the title "scourge of witches," and on 9 April, 1583, Charles III raised him to noble rank as a recognition of the tireless services he had rendered the State. The letters patent say: "En chacune de ces charges il se serait comporté avec tel acquit et satisfaction de son devoir que nous en aurions toujours reçu bon contentement." On 1 August, 1589, Remy on account of his extraordinary legal knowledge and immense erudition was honoured with the title of Councillor of the Privy Council of Lorraine. The Duke now entrusted him with various commissions of the first importance, and on 24 August, 1591, when Remy was sixty-one years old he was named in succession to George Maimbourg Procureur-General of the Duchy of Lorraine, that is to say, Lord High Justice with supreme power and jurisdiction. Armed with complete control over all the courts throughout the duchy, not only did he encourage the magistrates to exercise the utmost vigilance in the pursuit, and the most unrelenting severity in the condemnation of witches, but, particularly during the year 1596, he himself journeyed up and down the province, examining suspects, searching out even the most remote villages and hamlets, and inquiring into all cases with the most indefatigable energy and perseverance. Remy filled the high office of Procurer-General from 1591 to 1606.

During the few intervals of leisure his duties allowed he was wont to retire to his country-house at Saint-Mard, near Bayon, where he delighted to turn to literary studies, *amoeniora studia*, and woo the Muse both in French and in Latin. During term-time he lived at Nancy in a house in the Rue du Haut-Bourgeois, as appears from a list of the householders of Nancy drawn up in 1589, and preserved in the library of that town. Remy was married, by some it is said to an Italian lady, and he was the father of a numerous family, of whom his three sons, Claude, Emmanuel, and Scipione were especially distinguished. On 3 June, 1598, a son of Nicolas Remy, who was then sixty-eight years old, was baptized at the parish church of Notre-Dame de Nancy, as appears from the registers of that date. It were superfluous to recount in detail the honours which were heaped upon him by his sovereign and his fellow-citizens. On 26 August, 1599, the Duke at the request of his daughter-in-law, Catherine de Bourbon (sister of Henry IV of France), granted to Claude, Remy's eldest son, the reversion of the post of Procurer-General. Remy himself actually filled the office until 1606, when Claude, who had just completed a brilliant course of study at Paris, was ready to undertake the duties from his father, who at the age of

seventy-two retired to Charmes to rest in the eventide of a long and honoured life. He was required, however, to pen a description of the ceremonies which took place when Margherita de Gonzaga, daughter of the Duke of Mantua and second wife of Henri le Bon, Duc de Bar, made her state entry into Nancy on 15 June, 1606. The brochure, written in most elegant Latin, is entitled *Quae sunt ad XVII Cal. Iul. An. M. DC. VI. honoris ergo exhibitaeque aduentante primum ad Nanceium Sereniss. Margarita, Clariloci ad Nanceium, excudebat Ioannes Sauine typographus*. Again, when Henri le Bon, now become Henri II of Lorraine, was arranging his entry into his good city of Nancy in 1609, the painter Florent Drouin was sent to Remy that he might confer with the old councillor concerning the mottoes and verses proper to be inscribed upon the tablatures and triumphal arches. A few months previously, on 7 March, 1609, Henri II as a particular mark of his esteem had granted Remy an additional pension of 300 francs. The Duke's entry actually took place on 20 April, 1610, and among the most eminent guests at the state banquet which was held at the Hôtel-de-Ville, were Nicolas Remy and his son the Procurer-General, Claude. The verses Remy had written for the occasion, although not actually inscribed in golden letters on the arches, since the Duke had ordered the strictest economy, were printed, *Quae primum solennius in urbem Nanceium ingredienti Henrico II duci Lotharingiae. . . . Ciues adornabant, nisi, ut sumptibus parceretur, uetuisset eius Celsitudo*, Nanceii 1610. Remy died the death of the just at Charmes in April, 1612.

As might have been expected from so great a lover of books, Nicolas Remy left a large and valuable library. Many of these volumes with his signature are in the Musée lorrain at Nancy; others have passed into the hands of collectors, and in particular M. Lucien Wiener possesses several of these treasures. A portrait of Remy, engraved by Woëriot, has been preserved. It is an oval medallion. The countenance is marked by the highest intelligence, and there is an air of profound gravity. Formerly the Musée lorrain exhibited as a portrait of Remy an oil painting which was reproduced by Leclerc in the *Mémoires de l'Académie de Stanislas*, 1868 (p. xxxix), but it is unlike the genuine portrait and is now thought by most authorities to be Claude Remy, the eldest son of Nicolas. Details of this may be found in the *Journal de la Société d'archéologie lorraine*, 1857, pp. 240-1.

The fruit of Nicolas Remy's historical studies may be seen in his *Discours Des Choses Advenues En Lorraine, depuis le decez du Duc Nicolas iusques à celui du Duc René*. This treatise was dedicated "A Serenissime Prince Monseigneur Maximilian Comte Palatin du Rhin, Duc de la haute & basse Bauiere, &c.," and was printed at Pont-à-Mousson "Par Melchior Bernard, imprimeur de Monseigneur le Duc de Lorraine en son Vniuersité," 4to, 1605. In this edition the very beautiful engraved title with the figures of Prudence and Strength should be remarked. This book was reprinted in 1617 and 1626. The



death of Duke Charles III was signaled by an Elegy from Remy's pen.

But the most famous of all his productions is his Demonolatry, "a terrible, and in some sense an awe-inspiring volume." *Nicolai Remigii, Sereniss. Ducis Lotharingiae A Consiliis Interioribus Et In Eius Ditione Lotharingica cognitoris publici DAEMONOLATREIAE LIBRI TRES, Ex Iudiciis capitalibus nongentorum plus minus hominum, qui sortilegii crimen intra annos quindecim in Lotharingia capite luerunt.* The first edition was published at Lyons, 4to, 1595, and in the same year it was issued at Cologne, "apud Henricum Falkenburg." There is a duodecimo edition of Frankfort, "In officina Palthenii." This was reprinted in 1597, and the Frankfort bookseller Zacharias Palten dedicated his edition to the "highly renowned and most distinguished scholar, Otto Casmann, school-rector, sometime preacher at Stade," because he in his teaching was in full agreement with this admirable treatise. In his *History of the German People*, Part III, vi, Janssen says: "This work was found to be of such general usefulness that in the years 1596 and 1598 a German translation of it was brought out under the title 'Daemonolatria,' i.e. 'Von Unholden und Zaubergeistern, des Edlen Ehrenvesten und hochgelarten Herrn Nicolai Remigii welche wunderbarliche Historien, so sich mit der Hexen deren über 800 im Herzogtum Lotharingen verbrennet, zugetragen, sehr nützlich, lieblich und notwendig zu lesen.'" The translation was by Teucrides Annaeus Privatus, Frankfort, at the shop of Cratandrus Palthenius. Remy's work was reprinted at Hamburg, quarto, in 1693 and 1698. There is also a German translation with an engraved frontispiece of considerable merit, Hamburg, octavo, 1693.

As perhaps might have been expected, the energy and vigour of Nicolas Remy earned him many enemies among the Satanists, and although they hardly dared oppose him openly during his lifetime, after his death the most ignoble and lying legends were circulated concerning this great and noble name. It would perhaps hardly seem worth while making reference to such stories, but unfortunately they won credence amongst those who wished to believe them, and as they have actually appeared in print and are quoted, these calumnies cannot entirely be passed over in silence. The following ridiculous canard is retailed by Alexandre Erdan in his *La France Mystique*, second edition, Amsterdam, 1858, Vol. I, p. 133, xl, where we are told of Remy: "Ce misérable parla tant et si ardemment du démon, qu'il finit par en perdre la tête: il alla, un beau jour, se dénoncer lui-même comme sorcier, et il fut brûlé publiquement." "If they have called the goodman of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?" The following account of Remy I have translated from that most erudite work, *Bibliothèque Lorraine, ou Histoire des Hommes Illustres*, folio, Nancy, 1751. This we owe to the learning and labours of the famous Benedictine Dom Augustine Calmet, one of the greatest

scholars of the eighteenth century, who was born at Menil-la-Horgne, Lorraine, on the 26th February, 1672; and died at the Abbey of Senones, 25th October, 1757.

NICOLAS REMY, who was a Privy Councillor of Duke Henri II le Bon, and Lieutenant-General of Lorraine, wrote several works, amongst which are the following three volumes. *Daemonolatreiae libri tres, ex judiciis Capitalibus nongentorum plus minus hominum qui sortilegii crimen intra annos quindecim in Lotharingia capite luerunt. Lugduni in Officina Vincentii 1595. In-fol. parvo.* There is another edition, octavo, which was published at Cologne a few years later.

2. *Elegiae in laudem Caroli III. Lothar. Ducis.* These threnodies are quoted in the funeral panegyric of the Great Duke Charles III which is entitled *Macarismos*, p. 254; and also in the History of the University of Pont-à-Mousson, by Père Abram, S.J., Book 6.

3. *Discours des Choses avenues en Lorraine, depuis le décès du Duc Nicolas en 1473 jusqu'à celui du Duc René II.* There are several editions of this book, for it was published at Pont-à-Mousson by Melchior Bernard in 1605; and reprinted at Epinal in 1617 and 1626. M. Remy, writing during the reign of Duke Henri II le Bon, is anxious to prove that the Dukedom of Lorraine descends in the female line, but this is against all other authorities and contrary to the established opinion. [Remy adopted this argument because the children of Henri II and Margherita di Gonzaga were two daughters, Nicole and Claude.] This celebrated author, whose Latinity was most elegant, is distinguished as no mean poet. In those days Lorraine was infested with witches, and as he was greatly occupied in conducting their trials, he judged that it would be a useful task to commit to writing the memorials of these cases, which he has indeed accomplished in his *Demonolatreia*. He says in the dedicatory Epistle which prefaces this work that Theodore d'Ulis, president of the Exchequer of Lorraine, had informed him that such a book would immensely gratify Duke Charles III. At the end of the Preface are printed some copies of verse written by Claude, Emmanuel and Scipione, the three sons of M. Remy, lines composed in honour of their father and his Work.

In addition to these we have a *Recueil des principaux points de la remontrance faite à l'ouverture des Plaidoiries des Duchés de Lorraine, apres les Rois en l'an 1597, par Nicolas Remy, Conseiller de Son Altesse en son Conseil d'Etat, & son Procureur-General en Lorraine.* This book was published, quarto, 1597, at Metz by Abraham Fabert, "Imprimeur ordinaire & juré en ladite Ville." M. Remy in this *Recueil* explains and comments upon six articles concerning the duties and obligations of advocates. He says, for example: *No advocate should knowingly undertake any cause whatsoever which appears to him to be unjust, and if he should discover it to be unjust after he has undertaken it, then let him throw it up and absolutely relinquish it.* On page 20 he remarks: *As regards Usage, Precedents and Titles, I will say no more here except that*

*these are now brought into order, reduced to writing, homologized and published, a record which Lorraine has never possessed before, so that no advocate may for the future be able to find any matter for complaint, and allege that in such a difficulty and such a doubt it is impossible to establish any ruling by precedent, which has in the past too often been the case.*

In fine, before the reign of Charles III in Lorraine no body of laws had been written down and there was no reliable appeal to precedent. M. Remy, in this work, which is composed in French, quotes a large number of passages from Greek and Latin authors, and it is embellished, as is usual with his pages, with the ample fruits of his wide learning and most elegant erudition.

The praise of so great a scholar as Calmet means much, and it were superfluous to emphasize his encomium of the admirable Remy. We have briefly reviewed the events, the continuance and increase of the abominable society of witches, which led up to and necessitated his crusade in Lorraine at the end of the sixteenth century. No historical record could be more valuable, no record could be more interesting than this graphic account compiled from first-hand knowledge and the experience of many years which Remy has given us. That it is in every essential true I see no reason to doubt. Dom Calmet in his *Histoire Ecclesiastique et Civile de Lorraine*, livre xxxiii (folio, Nancy, 1728), writes: "Comment de persuader qu'une infinité de Procédures faites avec tant de soin et de maturité, par de très graves Magistrats, & par des Juges très éclairés, soient toutes fausses? que des effets aussi réels que ceux que racontent, par exemple, M. Remy, homme grave & sçavent, & dont il a rempli les trois Livres de sa Démonolatrie, ayant exercé pendant plus de quinze ans l'office de Juge & de Procureur Général de Lorraine; que tout ce qui a été écrit sur ce sujet par Binsfeld Suffragant de Trèves, homme très sage & très capable; que tous les procès de Sorciers & de Sorcieres dont les Greffes & les Archives de la Province sont remplis, ne contiennent que des illusions & des faussetez? Si l'on nous citoit des choses éloignées, arrivées dans un autre pays, & dans un siècle d'ignorance & reculé, je n'en déficrois beaucoup davantage: mais les Auteurs dont j'ai parlé, vivoient dans le siècle même où ces choses se passoient. Ils les entendoient, & en étoient très bien informez. Ils ont écrit dans le temps le plus éclairé, & le plus fécond en habiles, qu'ait eut la Lorraine. M. Remy cite les noms & surnoms des personnes; il marque les dates, les familles, les demeures & villages des accusez, & des témoins qui ont été ouïs, & qui ont comparu devant lui depuis les années 1580 jusqu'en 1590, à Nancy, & dans les Villages des environs."

That Remy should have stamped out the evil was, humanly speaking, impossible, but he certainly scotched it. Had it not been for his efforts and the efforts of other great and brave men, his contemporaries, it is difficult to say to what a height this plague of evil might not have grown. As it was there were terrible scandals during



the first half of the seventeenth century, but it was the work and the writing of Remy, Boguet, Bodin, De Lancre and others which enabled the authorities to deal drastically with the sorcerer and the Satanist. It is unnecessary to do more than refer to the cases of Louis Gaufridi in 1611; of Urbain Grandier in 1617; of Madeleine Bavent in 1647; and the terrible scandals which convulsed Paris in 1679-82. Actually the last execution in France for witchcraft seems to have been that of a man who was condemned upon multiplied charges by the Parliament of Bordeaux in 1718.

The prosecution, it is true, gradually ceased, but the devil-worshippers, albeit more secretly, continued their vile cult, and examples of their activities might be given throughout the whole of the nineteenth century. To mention but three of even later date, the horrible events which took place in February 1922, in 1924, and again at Bordeaux in January, 1926, the Mesmin scandals, assuredly called for the judgement of a Remy or a De Lancre. On Tuesday, 24th September, 1929, the *Daily Express* published an article upon the "Revival of Sorcery in France." Maître Maurice Garçon, a leading French barrister, declared that scarcely a week passes but some case of witchcraft comes up in one part of the country or another. This gentleman has made a special study of the survival of sorcery, witchcraft and Black Masses in France, and has appeared in court in many cases involving these dark practices. He has actually examined the pacts written and signed in blood, composed with every circumstance of legal phraseology, by which some wretches assign their souls to the devil in return for material benefits, power, money, or the gratification of their base lusts.

Nor must it be supposed that France is singular in this respect. The same horrid contracts are made in England to-day as were signed and sealed by Alice Kyteler, by Demdike and Julian Cox; by Pierre Aupetit, by Boullé, by Grandier, by l'abbé Guibourg. Witchcraft is practised in secret and almost overtly. Yet there stands the law divine which Nicolas Remy inscribed upon the title-page of his mighty work well-nigh three and a half centuries ago: *Uir siue mulier, in quibus Pythonicus uel diuinationis fuerit spiritus morte moriatur.*

MONTAGUE SUMMERS.

*In Festo Ssmi. Rosarii B.M.V., 1929.*

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## EDITOR'S FOREWORD

**I**T might, perhaps, almost be said that the best commentaries upon Nicolas Remy's *Dæmonolatreia* were the volumes of the other eminent authorities, Boguet, De Lancre, Guazzo and the rest; above all the supreme work of Sprenger and Kramer, to which subsequent writers so constantly refer, the *Malleus Maleficarum*.

These great men without exception wrote from the same point of view, they were contending against the same malign and baleful society, which, however divergent in its seemingly endless ramifications throughout Europe, however varied in minor details superficially modified by local tradition and peculiar use, was and is essentially and eternally the same, having as its object and aim the same adoration and dominion of the dark powers, working evilly everywhere the same evil works. As notably proves the case, the logical consequence follows that the pages of Remy should be illustrative of the chapters of De Lancre, and that De Lancre should colligate the Manual of Boguet, whilst Boguet in France so strikingly parallels the admired Guazzo of Milan.

There is one fact which stands out clearly from an intensive study of the demonologists, and as a contrary and entirely baseless error has been advocated for the acceptance of those who have little knowledge of this vast library, it may not be impertinent to correct a mistake that might on occasion mislead the less informed. It has been said that the witch covens of the Middle Ages and later centuries were a continuation of some old *paynim* religion (otherwise totally unknown), to which the name "Dianic cult" has been given. This is merest fantasy. Of recent years the theory has been put forward by the author of *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, but this lady signally failed to prove her proposition. It has been thought to be an original suggestion, although actually such is very far from the case. The same conceit, considerably elaborated, will be found in the work *Del Congresso Notturmo delle Lammie* by Girolamo Tartarotti of Rovereto, which was published at this town in 1749. Of considerable interest from the historical point of view, Tartarotti's work, so far as his arguments and conclusions are concerned, has long since been entirely discredited. The rubric of Chapter IX of the First Book runs: *Si mostra l'identità della Società Dianiana colla moderna Stregheria*. Unfortunately for himself, such demonstration was inevitably beyond the author's powers, although he makes a mighty effort to bolster up his crotchet. But then Tartarotti for all his oddities and his *idée fixe* was a scholar, and he had read the authors from whom he quotes.

In pursuance of the general plan of the present Series I have furnished this work of Remy with a minimum of annotation. As I have already remarked in

*my Foreword to the Compendium Maleficarum, I am constantly being requested to equip these manuals of the demonologists with far more extensive commentaries. Although I am bound to believe that such glosses would be useful, and I hope valuable to students of this vast yet all-important subject, to provide such an excursus is hardly practicable; since, maugre the fact that it were a work of altogether exceptional interest, in view of the immense amount of accumulated material of which much is the gathering of my own experience, whilst much has been conveyed to me by many correspondents whom I am well pleased to have an opportunity of thanking for their continued kindness, such an undertaking would necessitate the writing a History with relations well-nigh as copious and detailed as those transmitted to us by the indefatigable and judicious Remy himself.*

*My best thanks are due to Dr. H. J. Norman for giving much of his valuable time to reading through the proofs of this book as also for the generous loan of not a few rare pieces on witchcraft from among the many treasures of his library.*

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# DEMONOLATRY

## BOOK I

### CHAPTER I

*The Inducements by which Men may first be led astray by Demons, and so falling become Dealers in Magic.*

**E**XPERIENCE itself, to our own great loss and bane, affords us sad proof that Satan seizes as many opportunities of deceiving and destroying mankind as there are different moods and affections natural to the human character. For such as are given over to their lusts and to love he wins by offering them the hope of gaining their desires: or if they are bowed under the load of daily poverty, he allures them by some large and ample promise of riches: or he tempts them by showing them the means of avenging themselves when they have been angered by some injury or hurt received: in short, by whatever other corruption or luxury they have been depraved, he draws them into his power and holds them as it were bound to him. But it is not our purpose to discuss here what are those blind passions and desires by which men may be led into sin; for it would be a waste of time and an abuse of learning to involve ourselves in the much-worn controversy between Prometheus and

Epimetheus, reason and appetite. That we pass by, and say that Satan assails mankind not only through their secret and domestic affections and (if I may so express it) by burrowing into their very hearts, but also openly and in declared warfare, as it is called. For he openly addresses them by word of mouth, and appears in visible person to converse with them, as he did when he contended with the Saviour in the wilderness (*S. Matthew iv*). But this he does the more easily when he finds a man weakened by the hardships and cares of life; for then he suggests to the man that he is grieved at his misfortunes and is willing to come to help him. But not even so can he aid and assist any man unless that man has broken his baptismal pledge and agreed to transfer his allegiance to him and acknowledge him as his Master. But if he cannot gain his object in this way by mere persuasion, then Satan employs those allurements and temptations which I have already mentioned: he fabricates some fair and delectable body and offers it for a man's enjoyment: or he can do much by means of a false display of riches: or by providing drugs to poison those upon whom a man wishes to be avenged, or to heal those to whom a man owes a debt of gratitude: often, indeed, the Demons

forcibly drive and compel men into compliance by fierce threats and revilings, or by the fear of the lash or prison. For men may just as easily be led by violence to practise sorcery as by coaxing and blandishment, though I shall not here adduce examples to substantiate this statement, since this matter will be considered more fully in its due place: for the present I am content to say that I have found it to be the rarer case for a sorcerer to be driven by force into his abominable practices.

The truth is that, when Satan cannot move a man by fair words, he compels him by fear and threats of danger. When Claude Morèle, who was convicted of witchcraft at Serre (5th Dec., 1586), was asked what was the chief inducement that had first led him to give himself to the Demon, he answered that he had withstood the temptation of all the Demon's fair words, and had only yielded when Satan had threatened to kill his wife and children. At Guerningen, 19th Dec., 1589, Antoine Welch no longer dared to oppose the Demon in anything after he had threatened to twist his neck unless he obeyed his commands, for he seemed on the very point of fulfilling his threat. At Harecourt, 10th Nov., 1586, when he could by no promises persuade Alexée Driget to dedicate herself to him, the Demon at last threatened to destroy the house in which she lived: and this misfortune indeed befell her not long afterwards; but it will be more convenient to discuss elsewhere whether he was the actual cause of it, or whether he merely foresaw that it would happen. Certainly there are many examples in the pagan histories of houses being cast down, the destruction of the crops, chasms in the earth, fiery blasts and other such disastrous tempests stirred up by Demons for the destruction of men for no other purpose than to bind their minds to the observance of some new cult and to establish their mastery more and more firmly over them.

Therefore we may first conclude that it is no mere fable that witches meet and converse with Demons in very person. Secondly, it is clear that Demons use the two most powerful weapons of persuasion against the feeble wills of mortals, namely, hope and fear, desire and terror; for they well know how to induce and inspire such emotions.

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## CHAPTER II

*How Demons prepare, for those whom they have won by their Cunning, Drugged Powders,\* Wands, Ointments and Various Venoms of the sort: some of which cause Death, some only Sickness, and some even Healing. And how these things are not always, or for all Men, poisonous: since there may be found some who are uninjured by frequent Applications of them, notably they whose Office and Business it is to condemn Witches to Death.*

FROM the very beginning the Devil was a murderer (S. John viii), and never has he ceased to tempt the impious to commit slaughter and parricide. Therefore it is no wonder that, once he has caught men

\* "drugged powders." It was believed that witches spread plague and pestilence by means of these diabolical powders. During the visitation of sickness at Milan in 1598 it was popularly held that a band of sorcerers had engaged themselves to disseminate the disease. For the same reason the plague of Milan in 1629-30 was known as "La Peste degli Untori." These wretches daubed walls, doors, and furniture with some purulent matter, and they also scattered magic powders in a circle up and down the streets. To set foot in one of these meant certain destruction. See my "Geography of Witchcraft," pp. 559-62. See also Boguet, "An Examen of Witches" (John Rodker, 1929), chapter xxiii, "Of the Powder Used by Witches."

in his toils, his first care is to furnish them with the implements and instruct them in the practices of witchcraft. And lest the business should be delayed or hindered through lack of poison or difficulty in administering it, he provides them at the very first with a fine powder which must infallibly cause the sickness or death of those against whom it is used: nor does its harmfulness of necessity depend upon its being mingled with a man's food or drink, or applied to his bare flesh; for it is enough if but his clothes be lightly dusted with it. The powder which kills is black; that which only causes sickness is ashen, or sometimes reddish in colour. And since witches are often led by fear or bribery, and sometimes even by pity (of which they claim that they are not entirely destitute), to heal those who have been stricken in this manner, they are not without a remedy to their hand; for they are given a third powder, white in colour, with which they dust the sick, or mix it with their food or drink, and so the sickness is dispersed. And these drugs of varying properties and virtue are distinguishable only by their colour. Claude Fellet (at Mazières, 9th Nov., 1584), Jeanne le Ban (at Masmunster, 3rd Jan., 1585), Colette Fischer (at Gerbeville, 7th May, 1585), and nearly all the women of their fellowship, record that they always found the effects of their powders such as we have said. But this distinction in the colours is not so much to ensure the selection of the required poison (for the drugs owe their potency to the Demon, not to any inherent properties of their own), as a visible sign of the pact between the witch and the Demon, and a guarantee of faith. Matteole Guilleraca (at Mazières, 4th Dec., 1584) and Jeanne Alberte (at S. Pierre-Mont, 8th Nov., 1581) add that although the ashen-coloured powder does not as a rule cause a fatal sickness, it has nevertheless the power to kill when it is first

received by witches after their enlistment in that army of wickedness; for that initial step has a kind of preference.

But it is a matter of no small wonder that witches not only impregnate with such poisons articles of which the purpose and use is to drive away Demons, but even make use of them during the very time of prayer and the performance of the Sacraments. At Seaulx, 11th Oct., 1587, Jacobeta Weher was envious of the lover of the daughter of her fellow-countrymen Pétrone, but could not injure her as she wished; for the girl had emphatically bidden her beware of trying to harm her. But at last, under pretext of doing something else, she infected an asperge with the poison powder and sprinkled the girl with it as she was praying in church: and at once she was stricken with a mortal sickness and soon after died. At Blainville, 16th Jan., 1587, the whole neighbourhood, except Alexée Belheure, had been invited to a feast given by a noble knight named Darnielle on the occasion of his son's baptism. Ill brooking this slight, she evaded the observation of those who were carrying the newly baptized child and, sprinkling it with a poison powder of this kind, killed it.

And since it is not convenient for them always to keep this powder ready in their hand to throw, they have also wands imbued with it or smeared with some unguent or other venomous matter, which they commonly carry as if for driving cattle. With these they often, as it were in joke, strike the men or the cattle which they wish to injure: and that this is no vain or innocent touch is testified by the confessions of François Fellet (at Mazières, 19th Dec., 1583), Marguereta Warner (at Ronchamp, 1st Dec., 1586), Matteole Guilleret (at Pagny-sur-Moselle, 1584), and Jacobeta Weher whom I have just mentioned.

Yet there are those who, thanks to some singular blessing from Heaven,



are immune from such attacks;\* for witches have not always unlimited power against all men, as Jeanne Gransaint (at Condé-sur-l'Escaut, July, 1582) and Catharina Ruffe (at Ville-sur-Moselle, 28th July, 1587) have recorded that they were more than once informed by their Demons. I remember questioning that woman of Nancy called Lasnier (Asinaria), from her husband the ass-driver, upon the statements of the witnesses, and especially concerning this particular point; and she spoke with great indignation as follows: "It is well for you Judges that we can do nothing against you! For there are none upon whom we would more gladly work our spite than you who are always harrying us folk with every torture and punishment." Jaqueline Xaluëtia (at Grand-Bouxières-sous-Amance, 29th April, 1588), freely and without any previous questioning, acknowledged the same. This woman, having long been suspected of witchcraft, was put in chains; but after a little she was liberated by order of the Judge, because she had endured all the torture of her questioning in an obstinate silence. After much turning of the matter over in her mind, she could not rest until she had worked some evil upon the Judge who had treated her with such severity; for the filthy rabble of witches is commonly desirous of revenge. Therefore she ceased not to pester her Demon to find some safe and easy way for her to vent her

spite: but he, knowing her folly towards herself in this matter, kept pleading different excuses for postponing the affair and inventing reasons why he should not comply with her wish. But at length, since Xaluëtia did not cease to importune him, he told her in shame and grief that, in place of that fortune which he had often foretold for her, her own folly and impotence would be exposed and would betray her. "I have always, my Xaluëtia," he said, "endured very hardly the unbridled severity of those executioners towards you, and often in the past have I had a mind to be revenged: but I openly admit that all my attempts come to nothing. For they are in His guardianship and protection who alone can oppose my designs. But I can repay these officers for their persecutions by causing them to share in a common disaster, and will strike the crops and the fields far and wide with a tempest and lay them waste as much as I am able."

This is not unlike the statement of Nicole Morèle (at Serre, 24th Jan., 1587), that Demons are impregnated and scared with an especial hatred towards those who put into operation the law against witches, but that it is in vain that they attempt or seek to wreak any vengeance against them. See how God defends and protects the authority of those to whom He has given the mandate of His power upon earth, and how He has therefore made them partakers of His prerogative and honour, calling them Gods even as Himself (*Ps. lxxxii*): so that without doubt they are sacrosanct and, by reason of their duty and their office, invulnerable even to the spells of witches. Indeed they are not even bound in the least by the commands of the Demons themselves, even though they may have previously vowed allegiance to them and have been touched with the stain of that oath. For that witches benefit by the protection of the sanctity of a Magistrate's office (at least for as long as

\* "immune from such attacks." King James I in his "*Dæmonologie*," Second Book, chapter vi, discusses what power witches may have to harm the Magistrate. "If he be slouthfull towards them, God is verie able to make them instrumentes to waken and punish his slouth." But if he is diligent in examining and punishing of them: "GOD will not permit their master to trouble or hinder so good a worke. . . . For where God beginnes iustlie to strike by his lawfull Lieutenantes, it is not in the Devils power to defraude or bereave him of the office, or effect of his powerfull and reuenging Scepter."

they hold such office), so that they are free from all the most importunate complaints and instigations of their Little Masters, who testified by Didier Finance (at Saint-Dié, 14th July, 1581), who said that during the whole period of his magistracy he never once saw his familiar spirit, who at all other times had been his most sedulous adviser on every occasion. Therefore let the Magistrate undertake his duties with confidence, knowing that he is pursuing a vocation in which he will always have God as his champion and protector. By reason of a like sanctity Marcus, in the *De Operatione Daemonum* of Psellus, tells that his Demon uttered no sound upon the days when the Crucifixion and Resurrection are commemorated,\* although he strove his utmost to do so. Moreover, the poisons which Demons give to witches are thus harmless only to those Judges whom I have just mentioned; for there can be no doubt that the poisons which they gather and concoct with their own hands are equally injurious to all men else and are imbued with equal venom against all. It has, moreover, often been proved by experience that witches also have their own laboratories stuffed full of animals, plants and metals endowed with some natural poison; and these are so numerous and various that they may be reckoned as many as those which Agamede† in Homer (*Iliad*, xi. 741) is said to have known:

\* The passage is thus turned by Pierre Morelle in his Latin version of the *Περὶ Ἑνεργίας Δαιμόνων*. I quote from the Paris edition of Gilbert Gaulmyn, 1615: "*Siquidem sub Crucis Passionisque dies, atque ipsam nobis uenerandam Resurrectionem, nihil omnino mihi, quamlibet exoptanti suggerere uult.*"

† πρεσβυτάτην δὲ θύγατ' εἶχε ξανθὴν Ἀγαμήδην,  
ἣ τόσα φάρμακα ἤδη ὅσα τρέφει εὐρεῖα χθών.

The scholiast on Theocritus, II, 16, says that Agamede is the witch Perimede.

"Who knew all poisons that the wide earth breeds."

For they are in the discipline and service of that Master who is ignorant of nothing which has power to destroy men.

But I would rather that such matters remain hidden in the bosom of Nature than that, through my naming them, they should come to any man's knowledge. And it is for this reason that I have always been led, whenever I have found such things written down in the examination of prisoners, to have them altogether suppressed: or at least I would advise, or rather admonish, the actuary to omit them when he reads out such examinations in public. For in Lorraine it is the custom to refer the judgement of capital crimes to the votes of the ignorant and excited multitude, giving them full power, and having no regard to the provocation caused by a public exhibition of the accused; although this is contrary to the recommendation of the Duumvirs of Nancy, to whom the whole matter should first be referred. Would that these matters were not now so publicly known! But it has indeed come to pass after the wont of mankind, who with impetuous rashness thrust into the light those matters which should more particularly be kept hidden; and the memory of such things lives longer and is often more curious and pleasant to dwell upon than that of natural human happenings. In this way the Scholiast of Theocritus‡ wrote that after many ages he saw with wonder at Mount Selinus in Sicily the very mortars in which Circe and Medea brewed their poisons. And if men have so prized the mere implements, as if they were the earthen lamp of Epictetus, what must we think they would have done

‡ Theocritus, II, 14-16:

Χαῖρ' Ἑκάτα δασπλήνι, καὶ ἐς τέλος ἄμμιν ὀπάδει  
φάρμακα ταυτ' ἔρδοισα χερείονα μήτε τι Κίρκας  
μήτετι Μηδείας μήτε ξανθῆς Περιμήδας.

if they had found the actual poisons, or the secret rule of compounding them inscribed upon some monument?



### CHAPTER III

*That Witches can with safety anoint their Hands and their entire Bodies with their Magic Ointments: yet if they but touch the Edge of a Person's Garment it will at once prove fatal to such a one, provided that it is the Witch's intent to Hurt. For otherwise such Contact is harmless and does not injure.*

WITCHES have another most treacherous manner of applying their poison; for, having their hands smeared with it, they take hold of the very ends of a man's garment as it were to entreat and propitiate him. Thus it is hardly possible for you to be on your guard and avoid them, since the action has an appearance of kindness rather than of injury. Nevertheless, it is a most instant poison to the body, as has been made manifest by frequent experience: and it is the more marvellous because the witch's bare hand endures with complete safety the poison which thus penetrates even several folds of clothing. You may say that there have been men who have transmitted the infection of the plague to others although they themselves were free from it; but this is not a parallel case. For, as will be explained elsewhere (Bk. I, Chap. XXXVII), this touch of a witch is noxious and fatal only to those whom the witch wishes to injure: whereas the infection of the plague strikes those whom you least wish to harm. And this forces me to believe that, in the case we are considering, something is due to the hidden ministry of the Demon, which does not appear but works in secret; and that the unguent is merely the outward symbol of the wretched witch's complicity in the crime under

the guidance and advice of the Demon. Indeed we know from experience that the poison can with impunity be handled and touched by anybody after the witches have been thrown into prison and have renounced their partnership with the Demon; and the officers who are sent to search for their boxes of poison are able to bring them back in their hands with safety.

This was proved not long since (2nd Sept., 1589) at Furscheim, a village in German Lorraine. Marie Alberte and Catharina Praevotte, just before they were sentenced for witchcraft, were asked to say whether they had left any of their evil poisons at home, so that after they were dead these venoms might not be a danger to any. They at once told where the poison could be found; and the searchers brought two earthenware vessels containing bitumen spotted with yellow and white and glistening here and there with specks of metal. Otilia Kelvers and Anguel Yzarts (6th and 7th Aug., 1589) of the same town, and several other witches in other towns, were found to have done the same. Some may think that the witches give such information in order to curry favour with their Judges, and that they cunningly indicate some unguent which they have prepared for some other and ordinary domestic use instead of the true poison; but this is not the case, and there are many clear proofs that there is no pretence or simulation in this matter.

For, in the first place, if these unguents are put upon the fire they flare and splutter and glitter as nothing else can. Jeanne Michaëlis of Etival (2nd June, 1590) has testified to this fact. Again, there have been seen cases of witches who as soon as the Judge has given them permission to rub or anoint themselves with the unguent, have at once been carried aloft and have disappeared. Lucius Apuleius (Bk. III, *de Asino Aureo*) tells



of Pamphile\* that she in the same way applied such an unguent to herself and, after a few tentative leaps from the ground, flew up and away in full flight. And however much witches may differ concerning other matters, they are all, when questioned, agreed about the magic use, properties and powers of this ointment. They are even particular in describing its colour; and this provides further proof that the matter is no dream, but visible and perceptible to the eyes. At St. Dominique, 2nd Dec., 1586, Jeanne Gallée tells that the Demon gave it to her wrapped in oak leaves, and that its colour was white: and that she nearly always had her hands smeared with it that she might never be without the means of doing an injury on any occasion. At Haraucourt, 2nd Nov., 1586, Alexée Drigie agrees with this, except that she declared hers was reddish in colour: and she adds that when, at the instigation of the Demon, she anointed with it her husband who was lying asleep by her side he very soon died in great agony, writhing and contorting all his limbs.

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## CHAPTER IV

*That when Demons first approach their Followers, they bring them Money; but afterwards, when the Glamour has vanished, it is found to be nothing but Dung, Bricks, Leaves or some such Matter. Why they cannot give true Money, although they are said to be the Guardians and Keepers of the Treasures buried in the Earth.*

IT is surprising, since, according to Cedrenus in his notes on Zonaras, Demons are believed to guard and

have in their possession all the greatest treasures which have been dug out of or lie hidden in the earth, that nevertheless they can never draw from them any, even the very smallest, solid proof of their frequent promises of munificence and liberality to their followers: and if they do indeed produce and display any such wealth, they do so with no intent to enable men to make use of it, but rather use it as a bait to lure their dupes to destruction, ruin and death. Melancthon (*Progygnasmata Physica, Bk. II*) wrote that it happened so to a man of Nuremberg in the year 1530. A Demon pointed out to him a place where, he said, a great treasure had formerly been hidden; and in his greed for riches he at once opened up the place. He found a vault in which was a chest guarded by a black watch-dog: and as he went in to seize it, the vault collapsed and crushed him to death in a moment. One of his servants had been a witness of his attempt; and on seeing this he fled in terror at the great danger and spread abroad the account of all that he had witnessed. You see how the Demon would not make this man a sharer even of this world's riches, although he had led him on with a sure and certain hope of them. But there have been many instances to prove that this is a trick and deceit used of old by other Demons.

Now it would certainly be foolish to believe that they act in this manner through parsimony or a desire to keep that of which they stand in no need. Rather has God, in His infinite goodness to men, by His providence so

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theologian, lived in the twelfth century under Alexius I Comnenus and Calo-Joannes. His "Annales," a chronicle of the world from the Creation to the accession of John Comnenus in 1118 was much used in the Middle Ages.

Georgius Cedrenus, Byzantine historian, is the author of an historical work which begins with the Creation and goes down to 1057. Edited by Bekker, Bonn, 1838-39.

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\* "Metamorphoseon," III, 22. Pamphile the witch transformed herself into an owl, and then "paulatim terra resulat, mox in altum Sublimata forinsecus totis alis euolat."

Joannes Zonaras, Byzantine historian and



ordained it lest, if Demons were to reward men with true wealth, no man's integrity should be secure from so great temptation; and lest such money, once acquired, should provide the means for indulgence in every crime and wickedness: for Thales\* says that money has ten thousand drugs to induce evil. Therefore (as Psellus asserts) Demons cannot actually fulfil any of their promises, but can offer their worshippers the appearance only of certain empty, inconstant and unstable matters.

At Dieuze, 30th Sept., 1586, Senneel of Armentières received, as she thought, a gift of money from a Demon, and joyfully ran home to count it: but when she shook out the purse, she found nothing but bits of brick and coal. Catharine of Metingow (at Dieuze, 4th Nov., 1586) found swine's dung. Claude Morèle (at Serre, 3rd Dec., 1586), Benoit Drigie (at Haraucourt, 15th Dec., 1585), Dominique Pétrone (at Pagny, 20th Oct., 1586), and several others found the leaves of trees. Jeanne le Ban (at Masmunster, 5th June, 1585) found on the road a gold coin wrapped in paper as the Demon had foretold; but when she eagerly showed it to her husband she discovered, not without shame, that instead of gold she had a rusty-coloured stone which crumbled to powder at the very first touch. Of all these whom I have tried on a capital charge, Catharina Ruffa (at Ville-sur-Moselle, 28th July, 1587) alone admitted that she had once had three coins from her Demon with no deception.

\* "Thales." Actually Thales left no works behind him, and the "De Collationibus Diuitiarum et uirtutis," whence this is quoted, must be accounted spurious.



## CHAPTER V

*That it is not enough for Demons to hold Men bound and fettered by a Verbal Oath: but they furthermore mark them with their Talons as an Enduring Witness of the Servitude to which they have subjected them. In what Part of the Body this Mark is most often made: and how that part is entirely Insensitive and Devoid of Feeling.†*

IT is said that in olden times the cruelty and barbarity of masters towards their slaves was in many ways

† "devoid of feeling." There are very many records in trials of the insensibility of the Devil's mark. Robert Minto, minister at Aberfoyle, in his "Secret Commonwealth" (1691) writes: "A spot that I have seen, as a small mole, horny, and brown-coloured; throw which mark, when a large pin was thrust (both in buttock, nose, and rooff of the mouth), till it bowed and became crooked, the witches, both men and women, neither felt a pain nor did bleed, nor knew the precise time when this was doing to them (their eyes only being covered)." On 10th March, 1611, Louis Gaufridi, a priest of Accoules in the diocese of Marseilles, was visited in prison, where he lay under multiplied charges of sorcery, by two physicians and two surgeons who were appointed to search for the Devil's mark. Their report says they discovered three marks. The one was upon the right thigh. "When we had pierced this with a needle to the depth of two fingers' breadth he felt no pain, neither did any blood or other humour exude from the incision." The second was in the region of the loins. "Herein we drove the needle for three fingers' breadth . . . and yet all the while the said Gaufridy felt no pain, nor was there any effluxion of blood or other humour of any kind. The third mark is about the region of the heart. At first the needle was introduced without any sensation being felt, as in the previous instances. But when the place was probed with some force he said he felt pain, but yet no moisture distilled from this laceration." On 26th April, 1634, during the famous Loudun trials, Urbain Grandier, the accused, was examined to discover the Devil's mark. Two such marks were found, one upon the shoulder-blade, the other upon the thigh, both of which proved insensible even when deeply pierced with a sharp silver pin.

grievous, but its most intolerable manifestation was that they scarred them with marks as a precaution against their possible escape, so that they could easily be recognized and recaptured. And so to-day the Devil brands and seals those whom he has newly claimed as his own with such tokens of harsh and inhuman slavery, marking them especially (as some say) on that part of the body which was anointed by the priest on the day of their baptism; just as thieves change the brand on stolen cattle to their own mark. Yet I am not persuaded of the soundness of this last argument; for it will be shown later how the Demons more often soil and befoul with their talons those parts which the priest has in no way touched. Similarly, I cannot readily endorse the opinion of those who deny that such devils' marks, by wiping out the outward sign of baptism, become as it were a symbol of its opposite. For they argue that it is vain to attempt to expunge from the body a token which is deeply implanted in the soul: yet by the same reasoning it might be said that it is superfluous in baptism to sprinkle the body with water, although this is the sign of the inward cleansing of the soul.

But whatever may be the truth of the matter, the fact itself is beyond all doubt. For not only is it admitted by various persons who, in different places and at different times, have to their own loss experienced it, but they have even proved it by showing the traces of the marks visible to the eye. And it is a strange and marvellous fact that they can endure the deepest wound in that part which has been marked in this manner by the Demon's talon without feeling any pain. Alexée Belheure (at Blainville, 16th Jan., 1587), Nicolée Morèle (at Serre, 3rd Dec., 1586), and Jeanne Gerardine (at Pagny, 21st Nov., 1584) agreed in saying that they had that symbol of their perfidy branded upon their

brows. Quirina Xallaea (at Blainville, 25th Feb., 1587) was branded on the back of the head: Claude Fellét (at Mazières, 9th Nov., 1584) on the breast and back: Dominique Euraea (at Charmes, 27th Nov., 1584) on the hip: Jana Schwartz (at Laach, 28th March, 1588) on the right, and Jaquelina Xalueta (at Grand-Bouxières-sous-Amance, 29th April, 1588) on the left shoulder. And they said that the Demon had put these marks upon them at the very moment when they denied the Faith. The matter is, moreover, proved by the scars themselves, which are shown by a slight hardening of the skin, if anyone is doubtful and wishes to test the truth of it. And what may seem more wonderful is that the place is entirely bloodless and insensitive, so that even if a needle be deeply thrust in, no pain is felt and not a drop of blood is shed. This fact is held to be so certain a proof of capital guilt that it is often made the base of examination and torture; and such was the case not long since at Epinal (6th May, 1588). For Isabelle Pardée was there taken upon a charge of witchcraft, and told the Mayor of the town in which part of her body she had been thus marked by the Demon; upon which he decided to test the truth of this alleged insensitiveness. So he ordered a needle to be thrust and deeply forced into the place in the presence of a sufficient number of witnesses; and no drop of blood issued from the wound, and the witch gave not the slightest sign of any pain. At Porrentruy (30th Oct., 1590), again, Claude Bogart was about to be put to the torture and, as the custom is, had had her head shaved. A scar on the top of her forehead was thus plainly brought to light. Thereupon the Judge, suspecting the truth, namely, that this was the mark of the Demon's talon, which had before been hidden by her hair, ordered a pin to be thrust deeply into it; and when this was done it

was seen that she felt no pain, and that the wound did not bleed in the very least. Yet she persisted in denying the truth, saying that her numbness to pain was due to an old blow from a stone; but after she was brought to the torture she not only acknowledged that the mark had been made by a Demon, but recounted several other cruel injuries which she had received from him. And quite recently (14th July, 1591) at Essey, a village a mile distant from this city, the present magistrate of the place ordered the sergeant to apply this test to Mugette, who was charged with witchcraft. The sergeant therefore stripped her to see if he could find such a mark, and at last found it on her left thigh as big as a wart; and when he probed this as deeply as possible with his steel, he could neither force a groan from Mugette nor any drop of blood from the wound. But when he barely pricked the place next to the mark, she uttered a great cry of pain and the blood poured out.

Now the possible cause of this utter insensibility need not be a matter of very deep inquiry for any person who considers how nothing that comes to man from a Demon can ever be anything but mortal and pernicious. For it seems to me that they are very far from the truth who ascribe this matter to natural causes, arguing in the following manner: that the bodies which Demons form for themselves are of more than icy coldness: that matters which are brought into contact with or surrounded by extreme cold are usually dull and insensitive; just as, in the depth of winter, we become more sluggish and languid; and when we come to old age, which is as it were the beginning of death (and the dead certainly are cold enough; and, as Plutarch says in his *Moralia*, if a razor be placed in ice it becomes blunt through the extreme cold), all our senses are duller and more torpid.

"The blood\* grows sluggish with advancing age,  
And all the body's strength is frozen up."

Again, those parts in living animals which have the least heat have also the least power of feeling, such as the hair, bones, teeth and other like parts which, as Disarius says in the *Saturnalia*† of Macrobius, VII, 9, are impervious to feeling.

For it cannot be held that such is the quality of the numbness in a living creature's limbs caused by the Demon's mark. In the first place because, if anyone touches such a place with his hand, he can distinguish no difference or change in it. Secondly, because when the causes of a natural effect, especially if they are extrinsic causes, are removed, the effect also must disappear. But it is the nature of the Demons' touch, of which we are speaking, that the insensitiveness which it induces endures for ever; and the farther it is removed from its cause the more pronounced it becomes. Again, witches' hands, which Demons endow with the same fatal quality, are often warm and lacking in this kind of frigidity; yet limbs touched by them, even though protected by clothes, are afflicted with an enduring numbness of this sort, as has more than once been proved by experience. Finally, speaking in surgical terms, an abrasion or excoriation of the skin only consists, unless there is any further complication, in the skin alone, and lies no deeper: whereas in the case of even the slightest wound of the sort we are discussing, every part beneath it for as far as the longest pin can penetrate is entirely drained of all feeling.

\* "The blood." Vergil "*Aeneid*," V, 395-6:

"sed enim gelidus tardante senecta  
Sanguis hebet, frigentque effoetae in corpore  
uires."

† "*Saturnalia*." VII, 9: "Quae partes  
humani corporis sensu careant."



Therefore the cause must be something entirely different from cold of this sort, however bitter or hard. And I think that it bears the same relation to lightning, which, according to certain meteorologists, causes an enduring bloodlessness and insensitiveness in the limbs of animals which it strikes or touches. For lightning is, by contrast, of a fiery nature and has been the cause of many conflagrations, as Seneca\* has shown in his *Quaestiones Naturales*. I conclude, then, that we must emphatically insist upon what I have just said, namely, that there is in Satan some secret power to hurt and destroy, not governed by any natural laws: that they do but trifle time who seek to reconcile his actions with natural causes; as if he were not rather at perpetual strife and everlasting warfare with nature. This can be most abundantly proved by the following single example (which may serve as a corollary to what has been said before), which I heard lately, while I was living in the country at Saint-Mard,† from the husband of a woman who chanced at that time to be convicted of witchcraft. He said that he had for long suspected her of black magic, chiefly because, every Thursday night when he went to bed, he always felt her grow as cold as ice. For (as we point out elsewhere) that in Lorraine is about the time when the Sabbath is dispersed and witches depart from their Little Masters; and it is no ridiculous or absurd belief to hold that witches contract and can retain for some time this sort of frigidity from their contact with Demons. Moreover, it is not easy to conjecture any other cause than that which we have just propounded.

\* "Seneca." *Quaestionum Naturalium Libri septem* (addressed to Lucilius Junior), II, 21.

† "Saint-Mard." Near Bayon. Here Remy had his country-house.

## CHAPTER VI

*That Demons lie with Men, but in a Manner which is Cold, Joyless, Vain and Barren. That they nevertheless celebrate Marriages, and even simulate and pretend Jealousy.*

PLUTARCH in his *Numa*, arguing against the beliefs of the Egyptians, says that it is absurd to believe that Demons are captivated by human beauty and grace, and have intercourse with mankind for the sake of carnal pleasure. For Nature provides physical beauty as a stimulant to propagation, of which Demons have no need, since they were created in the beginning of a certain fixed number (*Lactantius, de falsa religione*: I. 8). It must follow, then, that such intercourse is powerless to generate so wonderful a creation as man. For, in the first place, there must be a complementary correlation between the species; and this cannot exist between a Demon and a man: so utterly opposite by nature are the mortal and the immortal, the corporeal and the incorporeal, the sentient and the insentient, or any two creatures which are even more opposite and contrary to each other. How such incompatibles can mingle and copulate together passes my understanding; and certes I cannot believe that any perfect or complete issue can be brought to life by such a union. For there must always be some proportion between the active and the passive agent, and the extremes must meet in some common mean, if they are to produce any result.

Moreover, if like is born from like, how, I ask, can a living being spring from the union of such opposite and dissimilar natures? I know that you will say that when Demons set themselves to this business they assume some body which they endow with the powers, nature and appearance of a living human form (for man is composed of spirit and body). Let it be



granted that they assume some body, for so far I am in agreement with you; but I think that body will be either the corpse of a dead man, or else some concretion and condensation of vapours; for methinks that I say elsewhere that they usually adopt one of these two methods of manifesting themselves to us. But, I ask, can anything more absurd or incredible be said or imagined than that that which is devoid of animal life can have any power or efficacy to impart life to another? For this process of procreation is governed by the laws of nature, according to which no semen can be fertile unless it comes from a living man. I am aware that Peter of Palude\* and Martin of Arles† have said that when Demons go about this work they, as it were, milk the semen from the bodies of dead men; but this is as ridiculous as the proverbial dead donkey's fart.

And if, as S. Basil (*On Isaiah*, X) and many others have maintained, the Demon's body is formed from a concretion of condensed vapours, still the business will go forward with no greater success, and such a body will be no more adapted to the work than that of which I have just spoken. For if, as Cicero says (*De natura Deorum*, II), the vital force which permeates the whole world springs only from the nature of fire, without which there can be no power or cause of procreation or generation: if, as Plutarch says in his *Moralia*, there is no reason for the lack of fertility in waste countries and the rugged rocks of mountains except that they are entirely devoid of fire, or

if they have any, it is very little: what seeds of life, I ask, what elements of birth can be looked for from such a nebulous parent which, being itself sprung from no father, has in itself no heat which it can infuse and communicate by the act of procreation?

It is a fact that all witches who make a Demon free of their bodies (and this they all do when they enter his service, and it is as it were the first pledge of their pact with him) are completely in agreement in saying that, if the Demon emits any semen, it is so cold‡ that they recoil with horror on

‡ "It is so cold." The physical coldness of the Devil and the repeated assertion at the trials that his semen was nipping and gelid may point to the use upon occasion of an artificial penis. Boguet, "An Examen of Witches," chapter xii (John Rodker, 1929), writes: "The witches' confessions which I have had make me think that there is truth in this matter (of actual copulation); for they have all admitted that they have coupled with the Devil, and that his semen was very cold; and this is confirmed by the reports of Paul Grilland and the Inquisitors of the Faith. Jacquema Paget added that she had several times taken in her hand the member of the Demon which lay with her, and that it was as cold as ice and a good finger's length, but not so thick as that of a man." De Lancre records: "Toutes les Sorcières s'accordent en cela, que la semence, qu'elles reçoivent du Diable, est froide comme glace: . . . Que si la semence est ainsi froide, il s'ensuit qu'elle est dénuée de ses esprits vitaux, et ainsi qu'elle en peut estre cause d'aucune génération." He also gives the confession of Jeannette d'Abadie, a witch sixteen years old, who said: "Elle fuyoit l'accouplement du Diable, à cause qu'ayant son membre fait en escailles il faut souffrir une extrême douleur; outre que la semence est extrêmement froide, si lieu qu'elle n'engrosse jamais, ni celle des autres hommes au sabbat, bien qu'elle soit naturelle." Widow Bush of Barton, an English witch, confessed that the Devil who knew her as a young black man "was colder than man, and heavier, and could not performe nature as man." Isobel Gowdie and Janet Breadheid, two Scotch witches of the Auldearne coven, confessed that the Devil was "a meikle, blak, roch man, werie cold; and I fand his nature als cold within me

\* Peter of Palude, of the Order of S. Dominic; died 1342. He is considered one of the most distinguished Thomistic theologians during the first half of the fourteenth century.

† "Martin of Arles." Martin de Arles of Andosilla, author of "Tractatus insignis de Superstitionibus, contra Maleficia, seu Sortilegia, quae hodie uigent in Orbe terrarum, in lucem nuperrime editus a Martino de Arles." Paris, 1517. There is another edition, Rome, 1559.

receiving it. In Psellus, *De Daemonibus*, Marcus makes the same statement: "If they ejaculate any semen it is, like the body from which it comes, so lacking in warmth that nothing can be more unfit or unsuitable for procreation."

I need not here run through all the arguments which are usually adduced in support of this opinion; for the fact is proved by actual experience. Alexander ab Alexandro\* (*Genialium dierum*, II, 9) records that he knew a man who told him that the appearance of a friend who had lately died (but it is probable that this was a spectral illusion of a Demon) came to him, very pale and wasted, and tried to get into bed with him: and although he fought with him and prevented him from doing this, he yet succeeded in inserting one foot, which was so cold and rigid that no ice could be compared with it. Cardan† also tells a similar story of a friend of his who went to bed in a chamber which had formerly been notoriously haunted by Demons, and felt the touch of an icily cold hand. But to come nearer home, the confession of Ponsète of Essey, who was convicted of witchcraft at Monthéry (4th April, 1583), agrees with what has been said above. She said that whenever, as is the way of lovers, she put her hand in her Demon's bosom she felt it as hard and rigid as marble.

Averroës, Blessed Albertus Magnus, and several others add to the above

as spring-well-water." Isobel added: "He is abler for us that way than any man can be, onlie he ves heavie lyk a malt-sek; a hudge nature, verie cold, as yce."

\* "Alexander." Alessandro Alessandri, born in 1461; died circa 1523. This famous Neapolitan juriconsult wrote learnedly upon archaeological subjects. His famous "*Genialium Dierum Libri Sex*," was first published at Paris in 1532.

† "Cardan." Girolamo Cardano, the famous physician, mathematician, and philosopher, was born at Pavia in 1501 and died at Rome in 1576.

two methods of procuring this monstrous procreation; a third which is perhaps more credible and probable. According to them, the Demons inject as Incubi the semen which they have previously received as Succubi; and this view can reasonably be supported by the fact that this method differs from the natural and customary way of men only in respect of a very brief intermission in its accomplishment. This objection, moreover, they easily overcome by quoting the extraordinary skill of Demons in preserving matters from their natural dissolution. But whether it be a man or a woman who is concerned, in either case the work of nature must be free, and there must be nothing to delay or impede it in the very least. If shame, fear, horror or some stronger feeling is present, all that comes from the loins is spent in vain and nature becomes sterile; and for this reason the very consummation of love and carnal warmth which it implies will act as a spur to the accomplishment of the venereal act. But all they who have spoken to us of their copulations with Demons agree in saying that nothing colder or more unpleasant could be imagined or described. At Dalheim, Pétrone of Armentières declared that, as soon as he embraced his *Abrahel*, all his limbs at once grew stiff. Hennezel at Vergaville,

† "Monstrous procreation." See Guazzo, "*Compendium Maleficarum*," Book I, chapter xi (John Rodker, 1929), "Whether there Truly are Incubus and Succubus Devils; and whether Children can be Generated by Copulation with them." Ludovico Maria Sinistrari, "Demoniality," 24, says: "When women are desirous of becoming pregnant by the Demon (which occurs only with the consent and at the express wish of the said women), the Demon is transformed into a Succubus, and during the act of coition with some man receives therefrom human semen; or else he procures pollution from a man during his sleep, and then he preserves the spilt semen at its natural heat, conserving it with the vital essence. This, when he has connexion with the woman, he introduces into her womb, whence follows impregnation."

July 1586, said that it was as if he had entered an ice-bound cavity, and that he left his *Schwartzburg* with the matter unaccomplished. (These were the names of their Succubas.) And all female witches maintain that the so-called genital organs of their Demons are so huge and so excessively rigid that they cannot be admitted without the greatest pain. Alexée Drigie (at Haraucourt, 10th Nov., 1586) reported that her Demon's penis, even when only half in erection, was as long as some kitchen utensils which she pointed to as she spoke; and that there were neither testicles nor scrotum\* attached to it. Claude Fellet (at Mazières, 2nd Nov., 1584) said that she had often felt it like a spindle swollen to an immense size so that it could not be contained by even the most capacious woman without great pain. This agrees with the complaint of Nicole Morèle (at Serre, 19th Jan., 1587) that, after such miserable copulation, she always had to go straight to bed as if she had been tired out by some long and violent agitation. Didatia of Miremont (at Preny, 31st July, 1588) also said that, although she had many years' experience of men, she was always so stretched by the huge, swollen member† of her Demon that the

sheets were drenched with blood. And nearly all witches protest that it is wholly against their will that they are embraced by Demons, but that it is useless for them to resist.

Therefore I think that it is manifest and plain enough that such copulation cannot so titillate the nerves as to evoke any semen; and everyone knows that without semen there can be no procreation. But let us assume that there are those whose lust can be aroused by such frigid and joyless embraces, and that the Demon can find here a man and there a woman of such sort; and let us grant that he goes from one to the other with great speed like a stage tumbler: even though the delay involved is of the shortest, the vital element must surely be lacking for the accomplishment of so great a matter as propagation. Physicians say that no coupling can have fertile results unless the male member penetrates to the necessary place, for the seed must be discharged in one place and must not be spent or dissipated on the way. For we suppose that as Plutarch records in his *Moralia* Zeno was right in saying that semen is a mixture extracted from all the forces of life, and that it loses all its potency and virtue unless it has a straight and uninterrupted passage to the womb. Therefore Galen (*De usu partium*, XV) said that a man's yard must be at its most rigid in the act of coition so that the semen may be carried as far as possible. For even though the semen may be fertile it is entirely incapable of

\* "Neither testicles nor scrotum." But a Demon with whom a witch condemned by De Lancre had connexion was otherwise provided. "Ce mauvais Demon ait son membre myparty, moitié de fer, moitié de chair tout de son long, et de mesme les genitoires."

† "huge, swollen member." Boguet, "An Examen of Witches," chapter xii, records: "Thievenne Paget said, moreover, that when Satan coupled with her she had as much pain as a woman in travail. Françoise Secretain said that, whilst she was in the act, she felt something burning in her stomach; and nearly all witches affirm that this coupling is by no means pleasurable to them, both because of Satan's ugliness and deformity, and because of the physical pain which it causes them as we have just said." In 1594 Jeanne Bosdeau confessed before the High Chamber of Justice at Bordeaux that the Devil appeared as "a great

Black Goat with a Candle between his Horns; . . . He had carnal knowledge of her, which was with great Pain." Hutchinson, "Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft" (second edition, 1720, pp. 42-3). The witches told De Lancre that "Le Diable, soit qu'il ayt la forme d'homme, ou qu'il soit en forme Le Bouc, a tousiours un membre de mulet, ayant choisy en imitation celuy de cet animal comme le mieux pourueu." Also, "Le membre du Diable est long enuiron la moitié d'une aulne, de mediocre grosseur, rouge, obscur, et tortu, fort rude et comme piquant."



procreation if it cannot be deeply enough injected, as happens in the case of those who are too quickly brought to the crisis.

Furthermore, if we could accept as truth all that has been affirmed on this subject, it would necessarily follow that God is the abettor and co-progenitor of these monstrous obscenities. For if Demons can contribute nothing more to propagation than is naturally contributed by men, namely, the fertilizing seed by which animal life is generated, and, as it were, passed on; then it should follow that the result should be a perfect and absolute human being endowed with a reasoning soul. The necessary conclusion is, therefore, that either the process is left in an incomplete and imperfect form, or God Himself puts the last touch to this imperfection and, in some sense, sets His seal to it. For, as Aristotle says (*De ortu et interitu*, Bk. II), it is certain that the mind comes from without and is divine by nature, and that its origin is not in the human semen. And Seneca (*De consolatione ad Albinam*, cap. VI) says: "If you consider the true origin of the mind, it does not grow from the gross earthly body, but descends from that Heavenly Spirit." Iamblicus (*De Mysteriis Aegyptiorum*) also tells that, according to the theology of the Egyptians and Assyrians, man derives his material body from the human act of coition, but his character from the higher and universal Cause. And it is the opinion of all devout thinkers (S. Augustine, *Quest. vet. et novi testam., post sententiam Rabinorum David Kimchi in Zachar. 12. & Mosis Aegyptii*) that the soul endowed with reason is divinely created and implanted in the body at the time when the limbs take their shape and form; that is, about forty-five days after conception (Hippocrates, *De natura foetus*). "He breathed into his nostrils," says Moses (*Genesis ii*), "the breath of life": which Josephus (*Ἰουδαϊκὴ Ἀρχαιολογία*, I, 1) interprets, "He endowed with a spirit man whom

He had already formed from the dust." Certainly the soul does not flow uninterruptedly through posterity like a river from its source; although I once discussed this matter with a man of no mean learning who tried to convince me that this was the case, basing his opinion upon the words which precede the above passage: INCREASE AND MULTIPLY. For such generation of soul from soul is quite incompatible with the immortality of the soul, which is, however, a fact beyond all doubt: because anything which owes its cause and inception to something else must also have its own ending and death. The Essenes,\* as Josephus tells in his *περὶ τοῦ Ἰουδαϊκοῦ πολέμου*, II, 7, were far wiser, who said that souls came from the rarest upper air and, drawn by some natural lure, entered into bodies as into prisons. And the greater weight should be allowed to their opinion, because from their earliest youth they carefully studied the sacred books and the utterances of the prophets and were far better fitted than any others to interpret the meaning of the histories of Moses. It would be the greatest shame to us not to agree with them in this matter; for their opinion was upheld by that of men far removed from the worship of the true God. Let us hear what Porphyry,† the most stubborn foe to the Christian faith, says on this subject: "It is a fixed principle of the religion and philo-

\* "Essenes." One of the three leading Jewish sects which flourished in the second century. Amongst them Moses was held in such high esteem that to blaspheme his name meant death. They held that mortal dissolution was welcome, since "bodies are corruptible and the matter composing them is not lasting, but souls are immortal and live for ever, and proceeding from the most subtle ether have been drawn into bodies as into prisons by some natural longing."

† "Porphyry." Born A.D. 233; died 303. Of his work, "Against the Christian," in fifteen books, only a few fragments preserved in the writings of the great Apologists have come down to us.



sophy of the Essenes, a most devoted body of men, that there are immortal souls which descend from the rarer upper air and enter into bodies, being drawn to the bodies by a sort of irresistible natural instinct." These are not the words of one who merely records the opinions and beliefs of others, but of one who approves and praises them. Proclus\* again, who was second only to Porphyrius in his fierce baying against the Christians in his *Epicheiremata*, writes (*De anima et Daemone*) as follows of this migration of souls from the upper regions into human bodies, and of the consequent notable change in their conditions: "The descent of the soul into the body cuts it off from the divine spirit from which it was filled with understanding, power and purity; but makes it partaker in generation, nature and material things, by which it is imbued with oblivion, sin and ignorance." It is clear from this that the mind is of divine origin, and is not infused or communicated by the seed of the parents. Such also was the teaching of Aristotle (*De anima*, I, 4) when he said that the mind is some substance which seems to come from elsewhere and does not perish; that is (as Lactantius explains more clearly and at greater length), it is joined to the material body only for so long as this lives and is nourished. For in the Seventh Book of his *De Institutione Divina* he writes as follows against the heathen: "The mind is not the same as the soul. Therefore from the time that it receives the faculty of breathing" (that is, as I interpret it, from the time that it becomes part of the animal life), "it continues with the body till the end, until it is freed from its bodily prison and flies back to its own place."

But perhaps somebody will raise the consideration of the following argument; that children are born from obscene, incestuous, adulterous and other abominable loves. Yet it should

not appear absurd that God breathes His divine spirit into such, just as He does into those born in legitimate wedlock; nor need anybody for this reason protest that God is the aider and abettor of such criminal lusts. Indeed it is a matter of great moment whether the order and course of nature instituted from the beginning by God shall be preserved, or whether in spite of, and rather in contempt of Him some mockery of it be set in motion. His first, supreme and eternal command respecting human propagation was INCREASE AND MULTIPLY. It is direct and simple. And just as, in legal phraseology, a direct heir is one who inherits straight from the testator without the interposition of a third party, or, as it is commonly called, immediately; so does procreation proceed directly from man to man, and cannot be communicated through the work of Demons. "There is no incongruity," says Peter Lombard† (*Sententiarum*, II; *Distinctio*, 32), "in the fact that God should keep unchanged the plan which He formed in the beginning of the human race, even though human sin has interfered with it." These things are of the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God, Whose judgements are unsearchable (*Romans* xi, 33). For so did God will that Abraham should by Hagar the Egyptian beget Ishmael, the forefather of many nations (*Genesis* xvi, 10), and Lot, his adopted nephew, through lying incestuously with his daughters, begot

† "Peter Lombard." "Magister Sententiarum," born circa 1100; died circa 1160-64. The "Sentences" ("Quatuor libri Sententiarum") may be regarded as the theological work which gives Peter Lombard a special place amid the authorities of the Middle Ages. Written about 1145-51, this great opus covers the whole body of theological doctrine. Towards the thirteenth century the various books were divided into "distinctiones," an old Latin term that first meant a pause in reading and then a division into chapters. But the author has done no more than let one Question follow another without separate sections.

\* "Proclus." Born in 410; died at Athens, 485.

Moab and Ammon, from whom the very populous nation of the Coelesyrians\* trace their origin (*Genesis* xix, 37, 38).

But it must be thought quite another matter if a man sacrifices his seed to Moloch, or uses it in any way other than that which is intended in that eternal command, or than is demanded by order or required by use and necessity. Indeed not even the heathen philosophers approved the licence of poets in this matter, when they displayed on the stage the loves, marriages, lusts and adulteries of their gods; and for that reason Plato rejected Homer from his Republic; and the Athenians pronounced him to be insane because, as Cornelius Nepos says, he wrote of gods at war with men. This subject was more widely discussed by Serapion in his Panegyric. It is therefore the more surprising that so many writers who profess Christianity should cleave to such an opinion and even tenaciously defend it. For even Jornandes,† who was Bishop of the Goths when Justinian was Emperor, did not hesitate in his book on the origin of the Getae to affirm that there were in Scythia witch

women, called in their native tongue *Aliorumnae* [*Haliuruna*], who were driven by Filimer the Gothic king into the farthest deserts, where they were embraced by unclean spirits and gave birth to hideous, fierce dwarfs from whom the Huns were descended. William of Paris,‡ Thomas of Brabant§ (*De universali bono*), Vincent of Beauvais|| (XXI, 30), Hector Boece¶ (Bk. VIII I), Johann Nider\*\* (*Formicarius*, V, 10), and others have confidently asserted the same about the inhabitants of Cyprus, the Hellequins, the

‡ "William of Paris." William of Auvergne, Bishop of Paris, mediaeval philosopher and theologian, born towards the end of the twelfth century; died at Paris, 1249. His works were first collected and printed at Nuremberg, 1496, and there have been several subsequent editions, one of the latest of which is Orleans, 1674.

§ "Thomas of Brabant." A Dominican, and suffragan bishop, 1201-70. He is generally referred to as Thomas Cantimpratanus, or Thomas of Cantimpré. His famous work, "*Bonum universale de Apibus*," was immensely popular, but is now of the last rarity. I have used the Douai edition of 1597.

|| "Vincent of Beauvais." Even the years of the birth and death of this celebrated encyclopaedist are uncertain, but the dates most frequently assigned are 1190 and 1264 respectively. It is thought that he joined the Dominican Order shortly after 1218, and that he passed practically his whole life in his monastery at Beauvais, incessantly occupied with his enormous work, of which the general title is "*Speculum Maius*," containing 80 books divided into 9885 chapters.

¶ "Hector Boece." Chronicler, and one of the founders of Aberdeen University, 1465-1536. The impetus he gave to historical studies at Aberdeen was of lasting effect. His works, particularly the "*Scotorum Historiae*," are highly esteemed.

\*\* "Johann Nider." Prior of the important Dominican house at Basle, Papal Inquisitor and Rector of the University of Vienna. He died in 1438. The "*Formicarius*" (or "*Formicarium*") is very famous, and there are constant appeals to his authority. The edition I have used is that of Douai, 1602.

\* "Coelesyrians." The name *Coele Syria* (ἡ κοίλη Συρία: hollow Syria) was first given to the low-lying part between Libanus and Antilibanus in the valleys of the upper Orontes and Lita; but it was extended so as to include the country east of Antilibanus up to, and beyond, Damascus.

† "Jornandes." "Filimer, rex Gothorum . . . qui et terras Sythicas cum sua gente introisse superius a nobis dictus est, reperit in populo suo quasdam magas mulieres, quas patrio sermone *Haliurunas* is ipse cognominat, easque habens suspectas, de medio sui proturbat, longaque ab exercitu suo fugatas in solitudinem, coegit errare. Quas spiritus immundi per eremum uagantes dum uidissent, et earum in complexibus in coitu miscuissent, genus hoc ferocissimum edidere. . . . Tali ergo Hunni stirpe creati, Gothorum finibus aduenere." Jornandes, "*De Getarum siue Gothorum origine*," xxiv, ed. C. A. Gloss, Stuttgart, 1861 (pp. 93-94).

Ursini, and the English Merlin\*; and Ecclesiastical History has given faith and authority to these tales. Following the example of Lactantius,† *De Origine Erroris*, II, 14 (whose error in this matter was, nevertheless, long since refuted), they uphold their opinion on the ground that we read in *Genesis* vi that the Sons of God lay with the daughters of men. But how very far they‡ twist the meaning of

this from the truth is clearly enough shown by the commentators on that

\* "Merlin." Boece, "*Scotorum Historiae*," folio, 1526, VIII, says: "Constans fama erat, Merlinū incubi, ac nobilis Britanici sanguinis femina cōcubitu, p̄gnatū, magicis carminibus malos demones ad colloquia excitare: & ex his quæ futura essent cognoscere." Joannes Nauclerus in his "*Chronicon*," volumen secundum, generatio x, writes: "Inuentus est tum adolescens dictus Merlinus, cuius mater confessa est se a spiritu in specie hominis concepisse, hoc est, per incubum. Hic Merlinus Ambrosius est dictus natus ex filia regis Demetæ, quæ monada erat." The marginal note has "Merlinus ab incubo demone conceptus," p. 559, folio, Cologne, 1579. Malvenda, "*De Antichristo*," Libri Secundus, ix, notes: "Merlinum seu Melkinum Anglicum uatem, de quo mirandæ fabulæ narrantur, ex demonio incubo & filia Caroli magni Sacra uirgine genitū produunt." One may consult "Die Sagen von Merlin," by San Marte (A. Schulz), Halle, 8vo, 1853.

† "Lactantius." "Deus . . . misit angelos ad tutelam, cultumque generis humani. Quibus quia liberum arbitrium erat datum, praecepit ante omnia, ne terrae contagione maculati, substantiae caelestis amitterent dignitatem, scilicet id eos facere prohibuit, quod sciebat esse facturos, ut ueniam sperare non possent. Itaque illos cum hominibus commorantes dominator ille terrae fallacissimus, consuetudine ipsa paulatim ad uitia pellexit et mulierum congressibus inquinavit. . . . Qui autem ex his procreati; quia neque homines fuerunt, sed mediam quandam naturam gerentes; non sunt ad inferos recepti, sicuti in coelum parentis eorum. Ita duo genera daemonum facta sunt, unum coeleste, alterum terrenum." Libri II, 14. It may be remarked that Remy wholly misunderstands the passage from *Genesis*.

‡ "Sons of God." This passage has been much discussed by the exegetes, and one may profitably consult the commentary in loco of the learned Sinistrari, who in his "Demoni-

ality," XXXII-XXXIV (translation by the present writer, Fortune Press, 1927) says: "We also read in the Bible, '*Genesis*,' chap. 6, verse 4, that giants were born when the sons of God went in to the daughters of men: this is the actual text. Now, those giants were men 'of great stature,' says 'Baruch,' chap. 3, verse 26, and far superior to other men. Not only were they distinguished by their huge size, but also by their physical power, their rapine and their tyranny. Through their misdeeds the giants, according to Cornelius a Lapide, in his 'Commentary on *Genesis*,' were the primary and principal cause of the Flood. Some contend that by Sons of God are meant the sons of Seth, and by daughters of men the daughters of Cain, because the former practised piety, religion and every other virtue, whilst the descendants of Cain were quite the reverse; but, with all due deference to S. John Chrysostom, S. Cyril, S. Theodore of Studium, Abbot Rupert of Deutz, S. Hilary and others who are of that opinion, it must be conceded that it hardly agrees with the obvious meaning of the text. Scripture says, in fact, that of the conjunction of the Sons of God and the daughters of men were born men of huge bodily size: consequently, those giants were not previously in existence, and if their birth was the result of that conjunction, it cannot be ascribed to the intercourse of the sons of Seth and the daughters of Cain, who, being themselves of ordinary stature, could but procreate children of ordinary stature. Therefore, if the intercourse in question gave birth to beings of huge stature, the reason is that it was not the common connexion between man and woman, but the operation of Incubi who, from their nature, may very well be styled Sons of God. Such is the opinion of the Platonist Philosophers and of Francesco Giorgio the Venetian; nor is it discrepant from that of Josephus the Historian, Philo Judaeus, S. Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Hugh of S. Victor, who look upon Incubi as corporeal Angels who have fallen into the sin of lewdness with women. Indeed, as shall be shown hereafter, though seemingly distinct, those two opinions are but one and the same.

"If, therefore, these Incubi, as is so commonly held, have begotten giants by means of semen taken from man, it is impossible, as aforesaid, that of that semen should have been born any but men of approximately the same size as he from whom it came; for it would be in vain



passage, who say that it does not speak of sons of God by nature and generation, but of those upon whom God bestowed some peculiar benefit and loved more than others and adopted into His family as especially dear to Him: such as were the sons of Seth. Those, on the contrary, are called the daughters of men whose only commendation was that they were born of the race of men; and such were the daughters of Cain. Moreover S. Augustine (*De Civitate Dei*, XV, 23) does not understand this passage in the literal sense, although he is fully aware of the old heathen tales of Incubi\* and Succubi and definitely affirms only just before that it is no fable that Demons lie with men.

I too am of opinion that we must accept the truth of this fact. But Torquemada† says in his *Hexameron*,

for the Demon, when acting the part of a Succubus, to draw from man an unwonted quantity of prolific liquor in order to procreate therefrom children of higher stature; quantity is irrelevant, since all depends, as we have said, upon the vitality of that liquor, not upon its quantity. We are bound, therefore, to infer that giants are born of another semen than man's, and that, consequently, the Incubus, for the purpose of generation, uses a semen which is not man's. But what, then, are we to say with regard to this?

"Subject to correction by our Holy Mother Church, and as a mere expression of private opinion, I say that the Incubus, when having intercourse with women, begets the human fetus from his own seed."

\* "Incubi." *De Civitate Dei*, XV, 23. S. Augustine says that there can be no doubt that the Silvans and Pans, commonly called Incubi, lust after and have lain with women; in fact certain Celtic spirits, Dusii (quosdam daemones, quos Dusios Galli nuncupant) are exceedingly lascivious and in their lusts continually fornicate and swive. The Holy Doctor says that this fact is so well established it were sheer impudence to deny it.

† "Torquemada." Antonio Turrecremata, whose *Jardin de las Flores curiosas*, Salamanca, 1570, was translated into French by Gabriel Chappuys as *Hexameron, ou six journées*, Lyons, 1579. There are also edi-

Dialogue III, Demons do not perform this act for the purpose of raising issue, or in order to give or receive any pleasure. (Pliny‡ says that it is but childish babbling to maintain that the gods married among themselves, but that in all those ages no issue was born to them.) Their purpose is rather, by the practice of such lewdness, to sink deeper and deeper into iniquity those whom they have once ensnared. It is ridiculous, therefore, when they assert that they are influenced by the passion of love (God save the mark!). Yet it is true, as will be told elsewhere (Bk. II, 2), that they contract and celebrate marriages with all the adulterer's or rival's impatience which is to be found among men. Nicole Morèle (at Serre, 20th Jan., 1587) said that when she had reached the age at which maids are wooed, and many suitors came to court her, her Little Master§ often beat her cruelly because she admitted them, and threatened her with worse punishment if she did not refrain from doing so in the future. And in the witches' Sabbats it is a crime (as they nearly all affirm) to touch, or even lewdly to solicit, a woman who has been joined in wedlock to another: so craftily do Demons play the part of the jealous lover. In this connexion Erasmus tells (*Epistolae familiares*, XXVII, 20) that there was a town in Switzerland called Schiltach which was completely burned by an evil Demon for no other reason than that the son of an inn-

tions of 1582, Lyons; 1583, Paris; 1610, Rouen. The third day treats of the incubus and succubus.

‡ "Pliny." *Historia Naturalis*, II, 7: "Matrimonia quidem inter deos credi, tantoque aevo ex his neminem nasci . . . puerilium prope deliramentorum est."

§ "Little Master." Magistellus. Delrio, *Disquisitiones Magicae*, II, xvi, says that a witch is summoned to the Sabbat, "Euocabatur uoce quadam uelut humana ab ipso demone, quem non uocant daemonem sed Magisterulum, alicui Martinellum hunc, siue Martinellum."



keeper (from whose house the flames began) had won the favour of the Demon's mistress: a story which will be fully narrated in due course.

But their great care to simulate all these emotions does but show how far they are from being true; for never is there so busy an ostentation of truth as when it conceals a lie, like a snake hiding in the grass. For wedlock was instituted in order to prevent fornication and for the procreation of children; but, as has been said, this cannot apply to Demons, since they are neither attracted by venereal concupiscence, nor have they any need to beget children: therefore it must follow that all this matter is a deception, a contrivance, a fallacy and a delusion. The truth of this is made the clearer and more manifest by the fact that they who maintain the parentship of Demons are nevertheless at odds with each other when they would determine the origin, nature and manner of the implied act: for this dissension concerning one matter is a clear argument for its falsity. Some maintain that such Devils' progeny is begotten by none but human semen by those means which I have just discussed, namely, by a rapid alternation of the male and female offices on the part of the Demon; and the children so born they call *Adamitici*, as though they descended in an unbroken line from Adam like the rest of men; and they say that in their infancy such children cry day and night, and are heavy but emaciated, and yet can suck five nurses dry; and that these defects are due to the impurity and the transference of that semen. (So William of Paris, *De Uniuers*, pars ult.) Others, on the other hand, claim superhuman powers for such children, and assert that they possess some attributes of divinity, such as the ancients used to ascribe to their heroes, who, according to Lucian, were held to be neither gods nor men, but both. Of this we have the fullest proof in what we find written of the birth of Castor and

Pollux, Bacchus, Alexander, Romulus, Aesculapius, and other such demigods: that they were begotten by those who were at that time called gods, but we call Demons, who hid themselves in an assumed shape and so embraced the mothers of these men. And the witches of our day assert that this is still easily accomplished by Incubus Devils, and that they are no less endowed with the requisite powers of procreation.

It may be argued that such a claim is a mere invention, evolved for the sole purpose of hiding the shame of the mothers; since it would have disgraced nobly born women if they had admitted their adulteries, incests and obscenities; and, moreover, that it would have been unseemly to asperse with any evil pollution the birth of men so famous and pre-eminent in both war and peace, who so well served their country by their labours and their heroic deeds. Yet even to this day nearly all men show by their speech and their thoughts that they truly and firmly believe in the procreation of men by Demons; and they think that their strongest and most unassailable proof lies in the fact that they can point to certain women who have lain with Demons and have given birth to deformed and portentous monsters, such as have been noted by Cardan (*De rerum uarietate*, XVI. 39) in Scotland, by Levin Lemne\* (*De Miraculis Occultis Naturae*, I, 8) in Belgium, and more than once by ourselves in Lorraine during our examinations of witches. But this argument can easily be refuted† by anyone who cares to probe and delve more deeply into the whole matter. For, as Ulpian

\* "Levin Lemne." The celebrated Dutch philosopher, born at Zirichsee, Zeland, in 1505. He died there in 1568. A disciple of Conrad Gesner, he long practised medicine in his native town.

† "This argument can easily be refuted." It may be remarked that the leading authorities do not agree with Remy.

says (*In l. ostentum, De uerborum significatione*), phenomena of this sort are against nature; and I take him to mean by this that they are disaccordant with the common laws of nature. For either they exceed the measure prescribed by nature with superfluous and extravagant limbs, as when one is born with three hands or, maybe, three feet or in some other part of the body is endowed in a preternatural manner. Such was the child of which Ammianus Marcellinus (*Rerum gestarum* Bk. XIX) records the birth at Daphne, a fair and progressive suburb of Antioch, which had two mouths, two sets of teeth, a long beard, and four eyes. And in our own time many children have been born with two heads, with six fingers, with two bodies, and with other limbs duplicated in a marvellous manner. Or else, on the contrary, they are lacking in the necessary and usual equipment of the human body. Such was that shapeless mass like a palpitating sponge or marine zoophyte with every evidence of life, which Levin Lemne says (*De Miraculis Occultis Naturae*, I, 8) an island woman brought to birth not long since in Lower Germany. I need not here mention the *Monosceli*\* who had but one leg, the headless *Blemmyi*, and the *Arimaspi* who had one eye in their foreheads, of whom we are told

\* "*Monosceli*." Better "*Monocoli*," μονόκωλος. Pliny, VII, 2: "*hominum genus, qui Monocoli uocarentur, singulis cruribus, mirae pernicitatis ad saltum.*" Aulus Gellius, IX, iv, 9, "*Item esse in montibus terrae Indiae . . . homines qui monocoli appellantur, singulis cruribus saltuatim currentes, uiuacissimae pernicitatis: quosdam etiam esse nullis ceruicibus, oculos in humeris habentes.*" The *Blemmyae* were *Ethiopians*. Pliny, V, 8: "*Blemmyis traduntur capita abesse, ore et oculis pectori adfixis.*"

The *Arimaspi* were supposed to be a Scythian people of Northern Europe. Pliny, VII, 2, says they lived "*haud procul ab ipso Aquilonis exortu.*" They were "*uno oculo in fronte media insignes, quibus assidue bellum esse circa metalla cum gryphus.*"

by Pliny (VII, 2 and V, 8): for the parentage of such creatures is said to have been known; but their shape and appearance was so depraved and hideous that their very foulness and ugliness struck the beholder with horror. Christianus Massaeus† (*Chronicon*, Bk. XX) writes of one such which was observed not many days before the sack of Ravenna; namely, a hermaphrodite child with one horn projecting from its forehead, with arms like wings, an eye in its knee, the feet of a hawk, and marked upon the breast with these marks—V ♀. The following example is no less astounding, for Levin (*loco supra citato*) testifies that he himself saw it. It had a hooked beak, a long smooth neck, quivering eyes, a pointed tail, a strident voice, and very swift feet upon which it ran rapidly to and fro as if seeking for some hiding-place in its stable.

But nobody, who is amenable to the processes of reasoning which always carry the most weight in this kind of argument, will fail to agree readily that all these creatures, in respect of the formation of their animal bodies, owe their inception to the same causes which actuate Nature in her undertaking of other matters. I shall leave out of account the duplications and superfluities of parts of the body; for such cases come under less suspicion of being the result of carnal relation with Demons, since it is agreed that they are due to an excessive abundance of semen, and there is nothing monstrous in their anatomy; and I shall base my argument upon that shapeless and unfinished mass which I have mentioned. Not even among physicians is there any doubt that this was begotten in the natural manner: they only differ in their opinion of the cause of its deformity. For some ascribe it to a malformation of the womb; some to unclean and evilly

† "*Christianus Massaeus.*" *Chronicorum multiplicis historiae utriusque testamenti . . . libri uiginti, Antwerp, folio, 1540.*

infected semen; some to the influence of the stars and the heavens, and especially that silent quarter of the moon which Varro calls intermenstrual;\* while others argue that it was due to other natural causes; and any one of those causes, or all of them together, would prevent the child from being born with a normal and proper body. Others again argue that it is due to the lustful imagination of a prurient woman without copulation with any man, by means of which it is possible for such abnormalities to be brought to birth. For without the co-operation of a cock, hens can lay eggs; but because of that deficiency they will not quicken, however long they are incubated, but rather become rotten.

Whatever may be the truth of it, I have never yet heard any suggestion made that a fœtus of this sort originates from nature, and not from Demons. For even honest matrons, far from the least suspicion of such execrable copulation, have often been known to give birth to such a child. And, on the other hand, witches who are said to have daily carnal relations with Demons often bear children complete with every natural attribute and absolutely perfect.

Now with regard to those horrific infants which, as soon as ever they see the light, are manifestly fearsome by reason of their cries and twistings and appearance, which are of the sort popularly ascribed to Demons; it may be urged that there is much to support the opinion that they are begotten by Demons. Yet Euripides in his *Electra* says:

"There is no birth but Nature is its mother."

But if the operative causes be a little more carefully examined, it will be found that there is nothing in them

which Nature may not acknowledge as her own work. For it is apparent that Nature uses a very large variety in her moulding of mankind especially; to such an extent that of all men living it would be hard to find two who are absolutely alike in features and habits, even if they be born together at one birth. This was clearly proved of old in the case of Esau and Jacob. No physician would jump to the conclusion that this is due to some quality in the semen, as if Nature should bring forth such utterly different effects from one and the same cause; for, on the contrary (as Cicero says in his *Cato*† and his *Laelius*‡), the way of Nature is always simple, ever aiming at and striving for uniformity. Then to what sufficiently probable cause can we ascribe this great variety? There has been great prolixity of argument about it, but it has been generally agreed that it must be chiefly referable to the mother's imagination. And in this point it should be noted what the Scriptures say concerning Jacob (*Genesis xxx. 38*). He bargained with his father-in-law Laban that he should have for his own all those sheep which were spotted or speckled; and in order that as many as possible should be born of that sort, when the sheep came down to drink he set rods of poplar and almond and plane tree upon which he had peeled white bands; so that by constant gazing at these the senses of the sheep should be affected, and the lambs which were to be born should take the imprint of those rods. And this wariness was not in vain; for nearly all those sheep gave birth to spotted lambs, although there was not one such ram in the whole flock. This proved discrepancy, therefore, was not due to any intrinsic property of the semen, but to the images of the rods operating extrinsically. But

\* "Intermenstrual." *Intermenstruum*: "the time of the new moon." Varro, "*De Re Rustica*," I, 37, 1.

† "Cato." "*Cato Maior seu De Senectute*," 33: "*Una uia naturae eaque simplex*."  
‡ "Laelius." "*Laelius siue De Amicitia*," IX, 32: "*Natura mutari non potest*."



if Nature allows such force and faculty to mere brute animals which have no power of thought, what can we expect in the case of mankind whose mind is, as Plato says, ἀεικίνητος, which Cicero\* (*Tusculanarum Disputationum*, I. 22) interprets as meaning "always moving itself, always doing something, never free from agitation even in sleep"? For in sleep man's mind is troubled by visions of his deeds and thoughts whilst he was awake (*Macrobius*† *Liber 1, In Somnium Scipionis*, cap. 3). I think it was for this reason that Pliny‡ (VII, 12) said that there were more differences among men than among all the other animals; since their swiftness of thought, their mental agility and variety in contrivance must set many distinctive marks upon them: whereas the minds of the other animals are inert, and each one is like every other of its kind. And although Leonard Vair,§ in his treatise *On Incantations* (II, 7), argues that the variety of spots upon Jacob's sheep was due to the secret might of the Divine will rather than to the influence of the striped rods, yet if the very truth of the story be carefully considered it must obviously prove him to be in error. For if God had intended to bring this thing about, what need would there have been to use those

rods as a sort of means or instrument of His work, which there is little doubt that He bases upon purely natural causes? Indeed, Vair is hoist with his own petard; for he forthwith praises the opinion of S. Augustine to the contrary (*De Civitate Dei*, XII) and, in the 20th chapter of his great book he adduces arguments against such an opinion, where he says that by means of those variegated rods Jacob defrauded his father-in-law of a great part of his flocks and caused him notable loss; and he adds that it is customary to place before sitting hens those colours with which we wish the chicks to be marked; and this precaution and forethought is most largely exercised by those who take care for their children by seeing that the bed of confinement shall have no pictures or decorations except such as are decent and ennobling. For Pliny says (VII, 12) that the mind is very retentive of such images, and that much that is popularly ascribed to mere chance is due to the influence of things seen, heard, remembered or imagined at the actual time of conception. Plutarch (*De plac. philos.* V, 12) says that many women have been known to give birth to children resembling those pictures and statues in which they had taken pleasure.

Now I do not understand this to mean that every individual must necessarily derive his appearance and characteristics from such a cause. For the operation of Nature's laws is shown by the fact that we find the features, mannerisms, voice, gait, and even the stature of the parents reappearing not only in their children but in their grandchildren after the lapse of many years. Often they have a distinctive mark on some part of their bodies peculiar to their family: as the sons and grandsons of Seleucius had an anchor on the thigh (Justin,|| XV);

\* "Cicero." *"Tusculanarum Disputationum,"* I, 22: "Aristoteles . . . ipsum animum, ἐντελέθειαν appellat nouo nomine, quasi quamdam continuatam motionem et perennem."

† "Macrobius." *"In Somnium Scipionis,"* I, 3: "Cura oppressi animi corporisue siue fortunae, qualis uigilantem fatigauerat talem se ingerit dormienti."

‡ "Pliny." *"Historia Naturalis,"* VII, 12: "Plures in homine, quam in ceteris omnibus animalibus differentiae, quoniam uelocitas cogitationum, animique celeritas, et ingenii uarietas multiformes notas imprimat: cum ceteris animalibus immobiles sint animi, et similes omnibus, singulisque in suo cuique genere."

§ "Leonard Vair." Born at Benevento, of Spanish descent, circa 1540; Bishop of Pozzuoli, where he died in 1603. His *"De Fascino, Libri III,"* Paris, 1583; Venetiis apud Aldwin, 1589, is a work of singular erudition.

|| "Justin." *"Historiae,"* XV, iv: "Figura anchorae, quae in femore Seleuci nata cum ipso paruulo fuit."



and it is said that the Dacians (Pliny,\* VII, 11) even to the fourth generation had on the arm a clear mark belonging to their race. At Bergamo (*Historia Venetorum*) the males of the family of the Colleoni were peculiar in that most of them were born with three testicles, a feature which was excellently exemplified in the famous Bartolomeo Colleoni, whose equestrian statue still stands at Venice before the Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo;† and for that reason the family still uses the seal and symbol of three black testicles. In the family of the Lepidi (Pliny,‡ VII, 12) three were at different times born with a membrane over the eye. There is the undoubted instance of Nicæus,§ a member of a noble family of Byzantium, who was born through his mother's adultery with an Ethiopian; and although he was quite free from any colour, his son was a pure Ethiopian. Similar to this is Plutarch's instance of a Greek woman who gave birth to a black child and was therefore convicted of adultery; but it was found that she was descended in the

fourth degree from an Ethiopian. The children of a sorceress of Nisibis|| had on their bodies the mark of a spear, the symbol of the Spartans; and this, in spite of the great lapse of time, gave rise to a conviction that she was descended from a very noble family.

Now when a child is born with some hideous deformity which distinguishes it from normal human appearance, this generally proceeds from some such excessive activity of the imagination as we have mentioned. For if a woman receives a strong mental impression and dwells deeply upon it, either at the time of conception or some time during gestation, the image of that thought will generally be imprinted upon her child: if she fixedly concentrates her attention upon some real or wished-for object, the result is that her vital essences are affected by it, and its image is transferred to and imprinted upon the child in her womb. Plutarch (*De plac. philos.* V, 12) quotes Empedocles to the effect that a child is fashioned in the likeness of some object seen at the time of conception; and the truth of this is fully proved by instances given by trustworthy writers. Heliodorus,¶ Bishop of Tricca, in his

\* "Pliny." *Historia Naturalis*, VII, xi: "Quarto partu Dacorum originis nota in brachio redditur."

† "SS. Giovanni e Paolo." The church, better known as San Zanipolo, was built 1246-1390 and belongs to the Dominicans. The famous statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni, the second equestrian statue raised in Italy after the revival of the arts, was designed and modelled by Andrea Verrochio and cast in 1496 by Alessandro Leopardi.

Colei (coleus = κολέος, Ion. κουλέος) are the testicles, as in the "Priapeia," xxviii:

"Sed quum tu, posito, deus, pudore,  
Ostendas mihi coleos patentes,  
Cum cunno mihi mentula est uocanda."

The great Italian humanist Francesco Filefo (1398-1481) frequently boasted that he was τριόρχης.

‡ "Pliny." *Historia Naturalis*, VII, 12: "In Lepidorum gente tres, intermisso ordine, obducto membrana oculo, genitos accipimus."

§ "Nicæus." This is from Pliny, *Historia Naturalis*, VII, 12.

|| "Nisibis." Or Nesebis (now Nisibin); also Antiochia Mygdoniae, a celebrated city of Mesopotamia, and the capital of Mygdonia. It was of great importance as a military post, often being taken and recaptured. Finally it fell into the hands of the Persians in the reign of Jovian.

¶ "Heliodorus." The identification of Heliodorus, the author of "Theagenes and Chariclea," with Heliodorus, Bishop of Tricca in Thessaly, founded upon a passage in Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, has been disputed. There is, however, no reason why Rhode should be followed in this groundless suggestion. On the other hand, the statement of Nicephorus Callistus (who died about 1350) in his "Ecclesiastical History," that Heliodorus was bidden repudiate his romance or resign his see, and chose the latter alternative, is just a fable.

The picture which had so great an effect upon Persina, the mother of Chariclea, was not

*Historia Aethiopica*, ('Αἰθιοπικῶν βιβλία δέκα), relates a story which, though it may be mere fiction, yet bears the mark of truth and is in accordance with all the probabilities. He says that an Ethiopian woman freed her husband of all scruples in acknowledging his daughter Chariclea when she told him that she had had a picture of Andromache before her eyes at the time that she fulfilled her wifely function; and the husband, who was a most keen-witted man, did not reject this as a reason for his daughter's, whiteness, which was contrary to nature and to the use of the country. The story of Marcus Damascene is well known, of the woman who gave birth to a child bristling with camel's hair, for no other reason than that, in the act of procreation, she had gazed upon a picture of S. John the Baptist. It was for this cause that, when his niece had given birth to a somewhat hairy child, Pope Nicolas III\* by an edict ordered the removal of all the pictures in Rome (Guillaume de Paris, *Chronicon Sabaudiae*, 46). Another man at Hertogenbosch, as Vair tells in Book I, chap. 12, *De Incantationibus*, had been acting the part of a demon in a Miracle and had not yet removed his mask, chanced to meet his wife and, impatient of further delay, embraced her: she then became pregnant and gave birth to a child similar in appearance to her husband, upon whom she had closely gazed during their embraces. It is told of a certain King Cippus† that horns grew out of

his forehead as he was sleeping, because his mind was too deeply exercised in dreams with some oxen in which he had been interested during the day. A young Spaniard named Diego Ozorio went grey-headed in a single night because he was fated to die on the following day. And although I know that these instances will appear to many incredible, yet I have thought fit to mention them so that, through rough and thorny places, a smooth and easier way may be prepared towards the truth.

In view of the above examples of the power of imagination, what should hinder us from confidently ascribing to the influence of sight those hideous births accomplished by Nature; as when, either at the time of conception or during pregnancy, women may study too eagerly the picture of some Cacodemon such as may be seen in paintings of S. Michael,‡ S. Epvre,§ S. Antony|| and others? And therefore the great jurists in their legal writings

*gentil-homme de Seville*," were immensely popular. Published at Paris in 1556, a fourth and complete edition was issued at Tournon in 1616. The present reference is to Livre II, 7.

‡ "S. Michael." Who is generally represented crushing the fiend, as in the pictures by Raphael, Guido Reni, Martin Schoen, Signor-elli, and other great masters.

§ "S. Epvre." Or S. Avere. S. Avere, Bishop of Toul, 500-505. This Saint, whose feast falls on 15 September, was celebrated for his power over demons and locally is held in the highest veneration. The see of Nancy is, as it were, the heir of the ancient see of Toul. Upon the Place de la Carrière, Nancy, is the modern church of S. Epvre, built in a Gothic style by Pierre Morey. The interior is very rich in decoration.

|| "S. Antony." S. Antony Eremita, the Great. He is invoked as a particular protector against evil spirits. The Temptation of S. Antony has been the subject of a vast number of paintings, some of most weird and fearful power. There are pictures by Martin Schoen, Teniers (who painted this scene twelve times), Breughel, Callot, Ribera, Salvator Rosa, Caracci, Isaac van Mechelen, and many other artists.

of Andromache (as Remy writes by a slip) but of Andromeda. At the hour of recognition it was produced, and King Hydaspes is amply convinced of the identity of his daughter.

\* "Pope Nicolas III." Giovanni Gaetani Orsini, born at Rome circa 1216; elected at Viterbo, 25 November, 1277; died at Soriano, near Viterbo, 22 August, 1280.

† "King Cippus." This is related by Diego Mexia, a Spanish writer of Seville, who dwelt long in Peru and did much to help and establish early Peruvian literature. Translated into French, "Les diverses leçons de Pierre Messie,

seem to excuse women of such a misfortune, as being due to fate and not their own fault. But if a picture can effect such a result, much more will the actual presence of a Demon. And it has been clearly enough shown that Demons are often visibly present to witches in one form or another. Therefore it should not seem wonderful that they at times give birth to children of such prodigious deformity\* (although I find that this has only rarely happened).

A harder matter to understand is the horrid harsh hissing which such infants utter instead of wailing, their headlong gait and their manner of searching into hidden places: for none of those things can be caused by any silent picture devoid of sense or motion, which affects the sight only, and not any of the other senses in such a way as to influence the embryo. Here we must confess that the Demons actively interfere and, for the most part, enter either the mothers or their unborn children and endue them with powers that are altogether supernatural. This question we deal with later, when we discuss their supposed power of metamorphosis (II, 5).

Granted the above premises and postulates, it is not, I think, absurd to say that the birth of such monstrous and deformed children is due to the

fact that, at the conception or during the formation of the child, its mother has had frequent intercourse with a Demon, the sight of whom has so strongly worked upon her imagination as to affect the appearance of the child. As for their savage utterance and their unnatural gait and running about, these are altogether from the Demon who, independently of the mother's will, has entered into the living child in the womb or into such as are untimely born through abortion. And this, as Alexander ab Alexandro says (*Genialium dierum*, II, 25, and V, 27), is the reason why such infants were formerly thrown into a river or the sea, or else banished to the ends of the earth. And at the present time the Church considers them unfit to receive Christian baptism,† and we take care to smother them to death as soon as they are born; doubtless because they carry suspicion of the hidden presence of a Demon lurking within them.

It is, then, most certain that such are the issue of men, not of Demons, even though their shape and entire composition may seem hardly human. Cicero says (*De finibus bon. & mal.*, I) that to understand the nature of anything, two points are to be considered: first, the material from which a thing is made; second, the force by which it is made. Now both of these are in the control of man, whereas neither of them is at the effective command of a Demon in the matter of such procreation. It is useless for certain men of ill-employed leisure to maintain to us

\* "prodigious deformity." For the question whether children can be generated by copulation with Incubus or Succubus devils see Guazzo, "Compendium Maleficarum" (Rodker, 1929), I, chap. xi. As this great authority says, there can be no doubt that a witch may bear a child from connexion with an Incubus devil, and all arguments to the contrary are vain and empty.

Dr. Havelock Ellis has treated in detail the Psychic State in Pregnancy and the pre-natal impressions of the woman in his "Erotic Symbolism," being volume V of the "Studies in the Psychology of Sex." He tells us that "a large number of cases of fetal deformities, supposed to be due to maternal impressions, cannot possibly be so caused. Many authorities have absolutely denied the reality of maternal impressions."

† "unfit to receive Christian baptism." This is clean contrary to the Church's teaching. The following rubrics are from the "Rituale Romanum": "In monstribus uero baptizandis, si casus eueniat, magna cautio adhibenda est: de quo si opus fuerit Ordinarius loci, uel alii periti consulantur, nisi mortis periculum imminet."

"Monstrum, quod humanam speciem non prae se ferat, baptizari non debet: de quo, si dubium fuerit, baptizetur sub hac conditione: 'Si tu es homo, ego te baptizo, etc.'"



that such geminate and hybrid births are due to external and adventitious causes. In short, to return to the point from which we digressed, there seems more truth in the opinion of those who deny that such procreation is due to the borrowing (if I may so call it) of semen by Demons. Yet I know that the contrary opinion is held by many learned authors with whom it would seem rash to disagree if this were a question of religion or sacred matters; but since it does not touch the principles of faith, and even the Fathers treat the matter as purely problematical, I do not think that I have at all placed my orthodoxy in question by a free exposition of the reasons which have led me to favour one opinion rather than any other.



#### CHAPTER VII

*That Demons condense for themselves a Body out of some Matter and assume the Shapes of various Living Things; and at times even take a Human Shape, but of a Low and Depraved Countenance, and always with their Hands and Feet hooked and bent like Birds of Prey.*

DEMONS are by nature incorporeal (*Psalm* civ, 4;\* and *Hebrews* i. 7); but it was agreed even by the Platonists that they can for a time assume and make use of a body condensed out of the air or from some grosser matter; and S. Augustine, in his *De Natura Daemonum*, does not deny that he is of the same opinion. S. Basil also, on *Isaiah* x, writes that the bodies of Demons are sometimes of air and sometimes of fire, and often compounded of both these elements: there can, indeed, be no doubt that the Demons take upon themselves just that kind of concrete body which answers

the particular purpose which they have in view; and their different shapes and appearances may be said to be as limitless as those adopted by Proteus in his various forms. For just as the exhalations of the earth form themselves into clouds which, when shaken by the winds, take an infinite variety of shapes; so also do the Demons, by means of their fluency and rapid dexterity, shape their bodies from a concrete condensation of air and vapours into whatever form they desire. S. Basil again, on *Isaiah* ii, says that they often freakishly infest men in the form of a cat or a fly or a dog Iamblicus (*De Mysteriis Aegyptiorum*) and Psellus (*De Daemonibus*) write that it is not possible to compute the various forms in which they busy themselves: for now they will confine themselves within the very smallest of bodies, and now dilate themselves into monstrous size; sometimes they appear as men, sometimes as women; they will roar like lions, or leap like panthers, or bark like dogs; and at times will transform themselves into the shape of a wine-skin or some other vessel. Alvarado à Minues, Oviedo, and those who have written of the customs of the West Indians, testify to very frequent meetings with Demons appearing now in the shape of one animal, now in that of another. And here it is worth while to set down the various shapes and forms in which they have manifested themselves to the witches of our own time.

At Serre, on the 19th January, 1584, Nicole Morèle avowed that, when her Little Master visited her in prison, he appeared in the shape and form either of a bird flying in by the window, or of a hare or mouse running around, or finally of a man by whom she was defiled. Jeanne Gerardine, at Pagny-sur-Moselle on the 23rd November, 1584, said that he likewise appeared to her in prison in the shape of a black dog. A woman called Lasnier of Nancy answered that she had seen him in the likeness of a crab, when I

\* "*Psalm*" civ, 4. "Who maketh his angels spirits," which is quoted in the "*Epistle to the Hebrews*," i. 7.



questioned her as Examining Magistrate concerning the depositions of the witnesses. Nearly all the women apprehended throughout the whole wide province of Lorraine have admitted that the Demon used to visit them by night, creeping through the window bars in the form of a cat or some other small beast. In fact there is no animal whose shape they do not at times usurp, when they are setting their snares and plotting their schemes: yet, as the Abbot John Trithemius\* observes, there is no shape which they more readily assume than that of man, since that is the most convenient in which to meet and converse with their subjects.

And herein is most wonderfully manifested the loving-kindness of God towards wretched mortals: for Demons can never so completely ape the human shape but that the deception is apparent to even the most stupid. Either their countenance is of a hideous foulness; or their hands and feet are distorted and hooked with claws like those of obscene vultures; or else they are conspicuous by reason of some evident mark which betrays the savageness of their nature. Johann Fischer at Gerbeville on the 4th May, 1585; Hennezel, at Vergaville on the 5th June, 1586; Salome, at the same place on the 27th August, 1586; Catharine Balandré, at Harberg on the 3rd December, 1584; Nicole Ganater, at Meinfeld on the 8th July, 1585; Sennel of Armentières, at Dieuze on the 30th September, 1587; and Jeanne Gerardine, at Pagny-sur-Moselle on the 24th November, 1584, affirmed that they had often observed their Little Masters carefully and attentively when they had appeared to converse with them, and had noticed that their features always appeared dark and obscure,

and shapeless (a characteristic noted by Jornandes of the Huns, who are said to be descended from Incubus Demons); that their eyes were deep set, yet flashing like flames; that the opening of their mouths was wide and deep, and always gave forth a sulphurous smell; that their hands were thin and deformed with hairs and talons; their feet of horn and cloven; their stature never in proportion, but always unnaturally small or great; and that they were in all respects out of due measurement. Alexée Belheure, at Blainville on the 16th January, 1587, added that she had sometimes seen her Demon appear without a head, or with one foot missing, when she joined with her companions in their nocturnal dances.

This brings to my mind the rumour which, in my childhood, was spread concerning certain hobgoblins which were said to be seen often dancing at night at the cross-roads, and were called "*La mequie Hennequin*,"† that is

\* "*Abbot Trithemius.*" This famous Benedictine scholar was born at Trittenheim on the Moselle, 1 February, 1462; and died at Würzburg, 13 December, 1516. Of his more than eighty works only a part have appeared in print.

\* "*Hennequin.*" Much folk-lore and tradition, old and new, are gathered around this goblin host. The word itself occurs in an extraordinary variety of forms, amongst the more common of which are "*herlequin*," "*herlekin*," "*hierlekin*," "*hellequin*," and "*hellekin*." In the "*Miracle de Saint Eloi*" the name *Herlaken* seems to be used as a synonym for Satan in the phrase "*par le conseil de Herlaken*." This form still survives in some remoter provincial districts of France as a term for the will-o'-the-wisp, and in Dorsetshire "*harlican*" denotes a troublesome imp or fidgety youngster. In Old French poems and romances the name denotes a ghostly being who was the leader of the shadowy hosts of the dead. In the thirteenth century French writers speak of "*La maisnie Hierlikin*" or "*La maisnie Helequin*" to describe a random rout of phantoms or evil spirits who rode abroad on stormy nights in wild cavalcade. In Holland *Hellekin* is still the wild hunter, so familiar from German tales, who scours the darkling air with his fearful pack. Walter Map speaks of a troop of night-wanderers, called *Herlethingi* (*phalanges noctuæ quas Herlethingi dicebant*), amongst whom "there appeared alive many who were known to have been long since dead." He says

the Hellequin family. For writers of repute have recorded that the Hellequins traced their origin to Incubus Demons; but we have already discussed whether such a claim is right or wrong. It is, however, a fact that even among the ancients Hecate\* was believed to go on one foot, as has been amply described and discussed by the commentators on Aristophanes and Homer; and she appeared not only during the night-time, but very often also at noontide,† especially when sacrifices were offered to the shades of the dead. I do not know whether this may rightly be referred to the passage in the *Psalms* (xci. 6) where it speaks of the Destruction that wasteth at noonday; though there are some who think that by this is meant Demons who transform themselves into angels of light, or of noonday. But it will be shown later (Bk. I. chap. 14) that the Demons do perform their dances even at noonday. And more will be said in its due place (I. 23) concerning their thousand variations.

that companies of these troops "were very well known in England even to the present day, the reign of our King Henry II," and he tells of a host of Herlethingi who were seen in the Marshes of Hereford and Wales in 1154. Odericus Vitalis, "*Ecclesiastical History*," VIII, c. 17, has an account of a priest named Wakelin, who, in January 1091, saw at Bonneval a company of Harlequin ("Herle-Kingi"), including many knights, ladies and ecclesiastics long since dead. See "*The Vampire in Europe*" by Montague Summers, chapter ii, pp. 97-98. They are often connected with a mythical Herla, "a King of the Britons in the old old time" of whom *Mapes* tells.

\* "Hecate." See "*The Geography of Witchcraft*," by Montague Summers, pp. 6-8. The *Empusa* was Ὀνοσκελὶς, Ὀνοκόλη. Aristophanes, "*Ranae*," 293; "*Ecclesiazusae*," 1056.

† "Noontide." The Herlethingi who were seen on the Welsh borders of Herefordshire appeared at noon, which was remarked as extraordinary. Leone Allacci tells of a vampire in the island of Chios who appeared at midday in the fields on the high-roads. "*The Vampire in Europe*," chapter iv.

## CHAPTER VIII

*That Demons use the Speech of the Women with whom they Converse; but their Utterance is indistinct, thin, and a hoarse muffled Murmur.*

ALTHOUGH, as we have already said in the first chapter of this Book, the Devil works chiefly by subtle and secret ways to drive men to sin, yet at times he employs for this purpose the power of speech such as men use in their intercourse with each other; especially when he is scheming to bind men to him by a formal contract in the pact of witchcraft. For this is no ordinary and momentary desertion to the Devil, like our lapses into sin due to human frailty: it is a documentary making over of ourselves, in the same manner as master and servant enter into an agreement legally expressed in set terms and conditions of authority and obedience. For this reason a personal meeting and conversation is needed in order that each party may ratify such a pact.

It has already been shown that the Devil often manifests himself to man in human shape. It will be no less easy to believe that he also holds vocal intercourse with men. For if he can form for himself a human shape out of condensed air, what is to prevent him from making use of the vibrations of the same matter to counterfeit the human voice? For by the reception and repercussion of such vibrations, even valleys often repeat and very articulately imitate the voice. This fact, indeed, led the ancients in their ignorance to regard certain statues, oaks and caverns as their oracles. Apollonius (according to the *Life* by Philostratus, VI, 4) says that they ascribed the power of speech to the statue of Memnon at the moment when the sun touched its lips, as it did at its rising. Nicephorus Gregoras‡ in

‡ "Nicephones Gregoras." A Byzantine historian, circa 1295-1359. His work is in thirty-eight books, commencing with the

his *Byzantine History*, Bk. V, says: "There are those who believe that certain Spirits, both good and evil, acquaint mankind with a knowledge of the future by means of a voice formed out of the air and sensibly sounding in the ears of men." And just as the sounds of the vocal organs can be reproduced in their various tones and accents merely by the control of the vibrations of a comb (as Juvenal\* says); so also, thanks to their skill in illusions, do the Demons, without tongue or palate or any functioning of their throat or sides or lungs, inform the air with any speech or idiom they please. Those who formerly inhabited Greece (says Psellus in his *De Daemonibus*) gave their replies in the heroic manner: those among the Chaldaeans used the speech of the Chaldaeans: in Egypt they spoke Egyptian; and when those who lived in Armenia migrated to other parts, they used the vernacular tongue of the inhabitants.

And still to this day witches affirm that their Little Masters speak to them in their own tongue as naturally and idiomatically as one who has never left his native country; and that they even take upon themselves names in common use in the vernacular speech. Margaret Luodman, at Vergaville on the 22nd January, 1587, said that her Familiar's name was *Unglück*, that is Mischance: Sybilla Haar, at the same place on the 14th November, 1586, said that hers was named *Machleid*, that is Harmful: that of Catharine Haffner, as she said at the same place on the 25th September, 1586, was *Tzum Walt Vliegen*, that is Flying-to-the-Woods; and Alexia Bernhard, at Guerningen on the 25th January, 1590, gave the name *Feder Wüsch*, that

capture of Constantinople by the Latins in 1204 and concluding with the year 1359. Twenty-four books have been printed containing the period 1204 to 1351. Edited by Schopen, Bonn, 1829.

\* "Juvenal," VI, 381: "*crispo numerantur pectine chordae*."

is Feather-wiper. Those who use the Romance tongue (for the inhabitants of Lorraine are divided between the two languages) mention such names as *Maistre Persil*, *Joly-bois*, *Verdelet*, *Saute-buisson*, and many other such which it would be idle to repeat.

But just as they can never so completely adopt a human appearance but that there remains something to expose the fraud and deception, as was shown in Chapter VII; so they cannot so perfectly imitate the human voice that the falsity and pretence of it is not easily perceived by their hearers. Nicole Ganater at Meinfeld on the 9th July, 1585, Eva Hesolette who lived in the vicinity of the Abbey of St. Epvre, Jana Schwartz, a native of Armcourt, at Laach on the 28th March, 1588, and many other women said that their Demons spoke as if their mouths were in a jar or cracked pitcher. And on that account it is always their wont when speaking to hold their heads down, as do those who speak in shame, being conscious of guilt. Or else their voice is feeble and weak. For Hermolaus Barbarus (Petrus Crinitus,† *De honest. disciplina*, VII, 2) told that he heard the voice of a whispering Demon answering a question which he and Georgius Placentinus had put to him concerning the entelechy of Aristotle. Pliny (XXX, 2) writes that the same sort of curiosity caused Apion the grammarian, a learned man, whom in his youth he had himself often seen, to summon a spirit to recite Homer, and asked it to tell what was its country and parentage, but did not dare to

† "Petrus Crinitus." *Petro Crinito or Riccio*. Born at Florence about 1465, died circa 1504. A pupil of Poliziano, he became one of the most celebrated literary men of his day. His "*De honesta disciplina*" ran into many editions; first, Florence, folio, 1500. "*Vitae Poetarum Latinorum*" won great renown, and his own poems were highly complimented, Ugolino Verrio saying:

"*Discipulique mei Criniti carmina Petri Aeternum uiuent.*"



relate its reply. I take this to mean that the Demon spoke in a voice so confused, ambiguous, muffled and feeble that he could understand no clear and certain meaning to report afterwards. For Psellus (*De Daemonibus*) says that Demons, for all their effort, give utterance to a thin, weak voice, so that by reason of the indistinct obscurity of it their lies may be the harder to detect. S. Gennadius,\* Patriarch of Constantinople, heard the confused voice of a spectre standing by night before the altar, when he solemnly cursed it, as is testified in their historical writings by Cedrenus,† Callistus‡ and Theodorus Lector.§ The Demon Ulmus|| (*Uita Apollonii* by Philostratus, VI, 10), which I conjecture to be a word formed from *Ulmus*, an elm, was summoned by Thespiesion, the eldest of the Gymnosophists, and greeted the sage Apollonius as he approached them. The lecanomancy of the Assyrians and Chaldeans used to

evoke Demons which gave utterance through the pelvis in a harsh, thin hissing. All these instances go to prove that imitation, which (as Fabius says, *Inst. orat.* III, 5) is proper to art, can never so completely ape nature that there is not always some difference, and that the very truth far outstrips the simulation which would follow in its tracks.

☆

## CHAPTER IX

*That Satan often Deludes men by an Appearance of Righteousness; and he has his Disciples as skilled as Possible in the same Hypocrisy, that their Wickedness may be the more Secret and less open to Conjecture and Suspicion.*

I AMBLICUS (*quando alia numina aliter appareant*) says: "Evil spirits often usurp the likeness of good angels." And S. Paul (*II. Corinthians xi. 14*) says that Satan most often fashioneth himself an angel of light; and always he wraps himself in some covering that he may the more easily deceive and destroy mankind. For who is so confident and secure that he would not at once take care to avoid and flee from the Devil, if he showed himself with his horns hideously standing out, as it were, from his forehead, and thus openly manifested his pernicious intents? Therefore, just as

"To coax a child to drink of bitter wormwood,  
Doctors first sweeten the cup with golden honey:"¶

so the Evil One, to make his worthless wares appear to men more saleable, covers them with a specious coating and (as Seneca said of the philosophers of his time), after the manner of apothecaries, conceals his poisons in

¶ "golden honey." *Lucretius*, I, 936-8:

"*pueris absinthia taetia medentes  
cum dare conantur, prius oras pocula circum  
contingunt mellis dulci flauoque liquore. . .*"

\* "S. Gennadius I." Patriarch of Constantinople, 458-471.

† "Cedrenus." Georgius Cedrenus, Byzantine historian. His chronicle commences with the Creation and goes down to A.D. 1057. Edited by Bekker, Bonn, 1838-9.

‡ "Callistus." Callistus Xanthopulus Nicephorus was born in the latter part of the thirteenth century and died about 1350. His "Ecclesiastical History" has been edited by Duchêne, 2 vols., folio, Paris, 1630.

§ "Theodorus." A lector attached to the Church of Santa Sophia of Constantinople early in the sixth century. He composed various historical works, but of these the "Historia Tripartita" exists in an imperfect MS., and his continuation of the narrative is only known from two lengthy excerpts.

|| "Ulmus." "το δεινα," ἔφη, "δένδρον," πελέα δὲ ἦν, τρίτον ἀπ' ἐκείνου ὕψ' ᾧ διελεγόντο, "πρὸς εἶπε τὸν σοφὸν Ἀπολλώνιον," καὶ προσεῖπε μὲν αὐτόν, ὡς ἐκελεύσθη, τὸ δένδρον, ἢ φωνὴ δὲ ἦν ἐναρβὸς τε καὶ θῆλυς. ἀπεσήμαινε δὲ πρὸς τοὺς Ἰνδοὺς ταῦτα, μεταστήσειν ἡγούμενος τὸν Ἀπολλώνιον τῆς ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν δόξης, ἐπειδὴ διήκει ἐς πάντας λόγους τὴν Ἰνδῶν καὶ ἔργα." It will be seen that the narrative somewhat differs from Remy's account; the marvel was performed by an elm tree.



boxes bearing the labels of the most beneficial drugs. The more easily to attract a buyer, Satan assumes the guise of a rich and prosperous merchant; and to beget confidence, he takes care to conceal all that is sordid, deceptive or unavailing. Even so do horse-dealers point to the splendour of the trappings and caparisons as proof of a horse's breeding. And notwithstanding that he holds nothing in such utter detestation as the worship of God and religious exercises, yet in his illusions and incantations he does not forbear to make use of devout pilgrimages, offerings, libations, holy rites and lustrations, solemn prayers, expiations, alms, and all such matters which smack of zeal in religion, a device which will be shown later in its place. It is for this reason that he teaches his subjects to acquire as great a familiarity with religious usages as with their evil superstitions, that they may keep themselves the farther from suspicion of their crimes.

Therefore no one need marvel that witches, who daily consort with Demons, so aptly and excellently imitate this hypocrisy: for, as Cicero says (*Epistola ad Atticum*, 11); "Like master, like man." As to the nature of this mask, no fuller description can be found than that of S. Paul (*Colossians* ii. 23) where he shows the true colours of such feigned wisdom, which are superstition, false humility of mind, and hurtful neglect of the body: for Satan so often lights up his darkness with this deception that it does not perceptibly differ from the light.

In Metz in our own time there was a parish priest of holy life, who very gravely expostulated with a magistrate for ordering the arrest of one of his parishioners, a woman who, in his opinion, more than all others practised her religion with the greatest devotion and piety. For she was always the first at all the Holy Offices, and was the last to leave the church, and that with reluctance: she never ceased from prayer even as she went her way,

and continually crossed herself: on no day did she fail to approach as a suppliant the shrines of the Saints: she used her rosary well and assiduously: she most rigidly observed all the solemn fasts: she addressed those whom she met gently and humbly: in short she failed in no single particular to give evidence of a lowly, pious and religious mind. Yet this woman, so commended for her great saintliness, was afterwards proved to be guilty of countless crimes of witchcraft, and was justly sentenced by the Judge to be burned. And, as far as I have hitherto been able to understand from their confessions, nearly all women convicted of this crime have always cloaked the abomination of their lives under a similar cover of false and pretended piety. Satan himself, their chief and their head, when he first approaches them, arrays himself in such a manner as to induce the hope of some gain and profit, as we have already pointed out. It would be no difficult matter to instance facts in confirmation of these conclusions.

In the very cradle of the world, in the form of a serpent he used coaxing words to impel Eve to pluck and eat the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge (*Genesis* iii). According to Josephus (*Ἰουδαϊκὴ Ἀρχαιολογία* I, 1), he was then living on terms of familiarity with Adam and his wife. Later, Moses exhibited his image in bronze to the Hebrews, that by beholding it they might be healed of the poisonous bites of snakes (*Numbers* xxi, 8 and *John* iii, 14). Again, the God Aesculapius was brought in that shape from Epidaurus to Rome in order to allay the plague. It was for this reason that many of the interpreters of the Hieroglyphics supposed that the serpent was at that time the symbol of bodily and spiritual health; and therefore the repulsiveness of this hideous and loathsome beast is here no valid objection to our argument. It may, however, be more helpful to quote more recent and definite authority. S. Gregory

(*Dialogues*, I, 4) writes that, after all other wiles had failed him, Satan appeared to S. Equitius\* arrayed as a monk, because that habit in itself gave a greater impression than the common dress of a saintly manner of life. Sabellicus† (*Ennead*, VIII, 1) and Platina (*Vita Celestini*) record that in the pontificate of S. Celestine I‡ (which, according to Massaeus, the author of the *Chronicles of the World*, was in the year 438) Satan appeared in Crete in the likeness of Moses, the most ancient of the prophets, and was seen by the Jews who inhabited that island, and told them that he would lead them on foot back to the Promised Land; and the sea stood up like a wall on either side, as did the waters of the Red Sea when the people were led out of Egypt; and many were beguiled by this illusion and, rashly entering the water, were overwhelmed and drowned in the sea; all except a very few who at the last were convinced of their folly and turned to Christ for help. Sulpicius Severus,§ in his Life of that Saint, writes that Satan once attempted to delude S. Martin, Bishop of Tours, by appearing to him in a golden crown and a purple robe as if he were Christ come down

from Heaven to judge the world. But when he found all his efforts vain, he fled away, leaving no evidence of his presence except an intolerable stench.

The entire Christian Church reverently and piously worships and venerates the Consubstantial and Coequal Trinity, as is proved not only by the undoubted evidence of the Gospel, but also by prophecies in the Mosaic mysteries long before. It is probably due to the influence of those prophecies that Hermes was called *Trismegistos* in the *Poimandres*,|| because the Mind God begat with his word a second mind to be his executive force. Affecting the glory of such great majesty the Demon, in the year 1121, appeared with three heads to a certain Premonstratensian canon and tried to persuade him that he was that Threefold Deity (whereas in truth he was the Triform Hecate) in the contemplation of whom the canon so fixedly occupied his mind; and that, because of his signal desert and notable devotion, he had appeared in visible form that he might worship his very presence. But the canon easily smelt the fraud and, after having received him with a great cry and shout, at last routed and drove him away.

It is not only by the assumption in this manner of a fair and goodly appearance that the Devil masks his abominable designs. For again and again it has been proved a false conclusion to argue that a cloak of righteousness is an indication of a godly life; and, as the proverb says, the cowl does not make the monk; and the life of many men is far different from their speech and appearance. Therefore

\* "S. Equitius." Bishop of Matelica towards the end of the fifth century. There is a record of his visit to Rome in A.D. 487.

† "Sabellicus." Marcus Antonius Coccius Sabellicus, the famous humanist, born at Rome in 1436. He long resided at Venice and lectured there. He died in 1506. His collected works were issued in four volumes, Basle, 1560.

‡ "S. Celestine I." He succeeded S. Boniface as Pope 10 September, 422 (according to Tillemont, though the Bollandists say 3 November); and died 26 July, 432, as is generally believed. The exact date is uncertain, but the year 438 given by Massaeus would seem to be some six or seven years too late for the event recorded.

§ "Sulpicius Severus." Born in Aquitaine circa 360; died about 420-25. He was a disciple of S. Martin, whose biographer he became. This "Vita S. Martini" was long immensely popular.

|| "Poimandres." Hermes Trismegistus was the name given by the Egyptians to Thoth, god of wisdom, learning and literature. To him was attributed the authorship of the sacred writings, hence called "Hermetic" by the Greeks. The name Hermes was thus put at the head of a whole cycle of mystic literature, produced in the Christian era. The "Poimandres" is one of the earliest of these treatises.

the Devil often uses such conversation as should promote piety, religion and holiness; and often even declares that he cannot enter into any pact or agreement without many such devout colloquies. Indeed this is one of his oldest tricks. For just as, in ancient days, the Pythian priestesses and the Vestals were constrained to perpetual virginity, so also now only virgins and women too old to sin with men can be admitted to the practice of certain divinations. Tibullus\* says:

Thrice the boy's sacred lots she drew;  
and he  
Brought her sure news of omens from  
the streets.

And there were not a few rites, such as those which Plutarch (*De cohibendi iracundiam*) calls *Nephelia* or *Melispoda*, in which it was considered the gravest crime to touch wine or to indulge in any luxury. Philostratus, in his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (II, 37), records that this philosopher informed the Indian King Phraotes that they who wished to consult the oracle of Amphiaraus were required by the priests to fast for a whole day and to abstain from wine for three days. And in Book XI of the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius we read of one Lucius who, on his initiation as one of the *Pastophori* in the rites of Osiris, was strictly bidden by Mithras the Priest to refrain from the pleasures of the table for ten days, to eat no flesh, and to drink no wine.

In this connexion I remember a not unamusing story which was told to me by Melchior Erricus when he was living in the intimate confidence of our Most Serene Duke; and I shall

\* "Tibullus," I, iii, 12-13:

"*Illa sacras pueri sortes ter sustulit: illi  
Rettulit e triuiis omnia certa puer.*"

Upon which Scaliger glosses: "*Sortes erant signa, quae dabantur alicui puero de triuiis, quae si conuenerant ei signo, quod ille, qui sortes dederat, habebat in animo, tunc bene secum agi putabant.*" "*Pueri e triuiis,*" *ὁ τυχεύων, oportebat enim ignotum esse.*

here relate it with the greater assurance, because my own doubt of its truth was afterwards removed by the very man of whom the story is told. Theodore Maillot (who as an old man became Governor of a Province in Lorraine) in his younger days was desperately anxious to marry a maiden of the highest nobility; but he was entirely and utterly without hope of winning her. For not only was he poor in fortune, but he came of a humble family engaged in trade, which was then despised as ignoble; and therefore he could see no honourable means of even declaring his love. Accordingly, as men in despair at hope deferred readily seize upon any plan without considering whether it should be followed or avoided, so Maillot approached a fellow-servant from Germany, who he had heard had a Demon ready to perform all that he asked, and told him his trouble, asking him not to begrudge him any help that he could give him, and adding that he would not prove ungrateful. The German eagerly embraced this opportunity: for in accordance with his pact it was necessary for him within a few days to render himself to his Demon, bringing with him another man willing to take over his debt, or else to have his neck twisted by the Demon. To effect his purpose, therefore, he appointed Maillot to meet him at twilight on the following day in a close and secret chamber; and hardly had they come there, when suddenly the doors opened and there entered a seductively beautiful girl (for the Demon purposely showed himself first in that shape, lest Maillot should be horrified at his frightful appearance), who said that she could obtain for Maillot that marriage which he so ardently desired, provided that he would follow her instructions. And when he eagerly and impatiently asked what was her advice, she told him first of all to avoid all thieving, drunkenness, lust, wrong-doing, blasphemy, and all other vices which defile the soul; to practise



devotion; to help the poor according to his means; to fast twice a week; to observe all Holy Days, and to pray daily; and sedulously to do all that it beseemed a Christian to do. For if he would bind himself by an oath to observe all this, he would without any difficulty win the bride that he desired. Having said this, and having appointed a day by which he should give his answer, she departed. Maillot, seeing that he could gain so great a benefit by such holy and honourable means, thought that he need have no hesitation in willingly and gratefully accepting. But as he considered more and more deeply about it and kept fluctuating between hope and fear, one of the household who was a priest guessed from his face that there was some matter which was thus distracting him and, after approaching him in friendly manner and discovering what was amiss, by his admonishments prevailed upon him not to stoop to any further conversation with the Demon. The German was thus disappointed of his hope; and it was not long before he paid the penalty according to his pact. For not many days later, as he was riding on a smooth and open road, he fell upon his head and died instantly.

In a recently written account of her, the author states that a similar experience befell Nicole Obry,\* the possessed woman of Laon: namely,

\* "Nicole Obry." This possessed girl, aged sixteen, the daughter of "Pierre Obry marchand boucher et de Catherine Veuillot demeurant en la ville de Vrevin, au pais de Tierasche, en l'euesché de Laon en Laonnais," was exorcized and delivered from the demon Beelzebub in the year 1566 by Jehan Bonlase, Professor of Hebrew in the College of Montaigut. The exorcisms were performed in Laon Cathedral, and the case attracted much attention. Bonlase wrote an account of the proceedings: "Le manuel de l'admirable victoire du Corps de Dieu sur l'esprit maling Beelzebub obtenue à Laon, 1566. . . ." Paris, 1575. This was several times reprinted, and there is an "abbrégée histoire" of 1573.

that her Demon, who appeared to her in the likeness of a black man, confined his speech with her to matters of holiness, modesty, religion and the study of the Scriptures; and when he first accosted her he was especially emphatic in urging her to that way of life above all. Did not the Devil, in order to tempt Christ who is the example of all the saints, speak in honour of the testimony of the Scriptures? Did he not fall down before Him and worship Him, saying: "Thou art the Son of God"? (Mark iii, 11). With the same guile and cunning he proclaimed before all the people that the Apostle Paul was the servant of God preaching the word of salvation, when he spoke through the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination (Acts xvi, 17). And to what purpose did he do this, but to embarrass the herald of the Gospel and, as it were, to smear his sword with honey, uttering the truth with most lying lips, and obscuring the clear light with the dense smoke of darkness? For this reason Christ rebuked him and bade him hold his peace; and similarly S. Paul cast him out of the body which he was then possessing.

Here may be noted the cunning of the Demon's stratagem. For in this manner he enters the Christians' camp by means of a false countersign, and then sets upon them and slays them with their own weapons. For although nearly all his words are in accordance with the Gospel teaching; yet since they are, so to speak, taken captive by him whom it is the greatest impiety to obey in matters of religion, they should therefore be carefully avoided and mistrusted: for, as S. Irenaeus says, their milk is mingled with gypsum. And even as there is said to have been found at Heraclea in Pontus the sweetest honey, but that whoever ate of it fell at once to the earth and died in the most amazing agony; so it should be clear to everyone that, if anyone is so credulous as to allow himself to be influenced by them, nothing but in-



stant destruction can result from following the Demon's ostensibly salutary precepts, maxims and examples. For since obedience is the very foundation of the worship of God, and Satan is before all the imitator of God, he thinks that he has done his work most excellently well if he can by any means lead men to obey him. Just as bird-catchers decoy birds into their snares and nets by means of the songs of trained captive birds, so does Satan train his subjects to speak always of piety, religion and sanctity, while, by means of such insidious words, he thrusts down those whom he has once caught, and overwhelms them in the gulf and abyss of all crime and abomination.

A third form of counterfeit saintliness consists in self-torture as it was formerly practised by the Donatists, and now by the Anabaptists and certain others of no account, who set far greater store by such a false ostentation of sanctimoniousness than by any true observance of Christian discipline and self-denial. It is manifest that this also is an invention of Satan, the destroyer of life. For how many of us can doubt that his purpose in this is that such men may be conspicuous in the eyes of men, and (as that famous dramatist\* has said) that they may engage the attention of fools by their funambulation, rather than practise piety from their hearts and show themselves to God, who holds His theatre in secret, as truly contrite and afflicted. Christ said: "Do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." This false ostentation was, moreover, condemned many years ago by men who had no knowledge of the true religion; for they

even counted it one of the greatest of human follies. Here, because of its old-time elegance and the rare splendour of its ornate and flowery style, I shall quote word for word a most apposite passage from Apuleius upon this subject. He says (*Golden Ass*, Bk. VIII), speaking of the Priests of the Syrian Goddess, Cybele: "Taking up a scourge (which these gelded creatures carry ever with them) woven to a great length from a tough fleece and knotted about with the knuckle-bones of many sheep, they violently beat themselves therewithal, and are marvellously able to endure the pain of the stripes. Then, as if a sword had been used for sacrifice, might you see the ground wet with the filth of effeminate blood drawn by the lashing of the scourge. And when through weariness, or sated with butchering themselves, they rest from tearing their flesh, they hold out their robes and many vie together to cast in alms of copper and even of silver; and thereto they give them bottles of wine, milk, cheese, flour and wheat."

Some few years ago there came to Mirecourt, the chief city of a large Province among the Vosges where I was for some years Deputy-Governor, a vagrant haunter of the markets whose practice it was to wander through the provinces in the guise of a penitent, and so scrape together money and other necessities of life. When the church was filled, as it always was on Sundays, he would sit down before the High Altar naked to the navel, holding in one hand a flint stone and in the other a whip; and then he would not cease to pound his breast cruelly, and wretchedly to lash his back. This he continually did during public prayer and on such days as High Mass was celebrated. The people at first pitied him and wondered what crime he had committed that called for so dire a penance, and so outdid each other in giving him alms. But the man, enriched by his lucrative begging, went gleefully to his hostelry,

\* "that famous dramatist." Terence; *Prologus* in "*Hecyram*," 4-5:

"*Ita populus studio stupidus in funambulo Animum occuparat . . .*"

where he first tended his body with certain lotions known to him which hardened him and enabled him to endure future stripes; then fell at once to eating and drinking wine, all the time reviling the very women who had hospitably received him with bitter and scurrilous words, and often with the foulest obscenities. This came at last to the ears of the Mayor, who had the man thrown into prison and questioned him as to why he so immoderately afflicted himself; and he was constrained to confess that he did so not, as he had before pretended, in order to expiate some crime, but rather to excite the pity of the people so that he might more easily and more profitably obtain alms from them. He added, moreover, that the lashing did not cause him so much pain as it appeared to the onlookers; for not only was he hardened to it by long use, but he also used certain herbs which numbed the feeling of his limbs and rendered them for a time less sensitive to pain. When the matter was thus cleared up and investigated, by order of the Duumvirs of Nancy who have jurisdiction over all criminals in Lorraine, he was sentenced to be whipped through the streets with uncommon severity, to be branded with a hot iron upon one shoulder, and to be banished.

That the ancient Egyptians also practised this kind of self-torture in their sacred rites we learn from Herodotus in his *Euterpe*. Ovid,\* *Ibis*, 453-4, writes that the Galli, the priests of the Mother Goddess of Ida, did likewise:

And may you in your frenzy geld  
yourself,  
Like those whom Mother Cybele incites  
To Phrygian excesses.

\* "Ovid." *Ibis*, 453-4:

"Attonitusque seces, ut quos Cybeleia mater  
Incitat ad Phrygios uilia membra modos."

And:

With frantic gestures do they geld  
themselves.

Horace also (*Satires*, II, 3, 223) writes:

Bellona delights in the shedding of  
blood.

For the devotees of that Goddess, whom Ulpian (*De officio Proconsulari*, Lib. VII) calls *Bellonarii*,† draw blood from their own arms with their swords. Martial also refers to this (XI, 84):

White arms are slashed by the too cruel  
knives,  
When in the Phrygian dance the fren-  
zied band  
Rages.

Pliny also has touched upon this (XI, 49). Alexander ab Alexandro (*Genialium dierum*, IV, 17) writes that such fanatics were derided by Zenocrates the Physician, who said that either they believed that they were Gods to whom they were sacrificing, in which case they deserved no pity; or else they believed them to be men, in which case they ought not to sacrifice to them. This also, according to S. Augustine in the *City of God*, Book II, xi, was the opinion of Antistius Labeo;‡ for he distinguished good from evil spirits by the difference in their worship: the evil were propitiated by

† "*Bellonarii*." For whom see Tibullus, I, vi, 45, etc.; Juvenal, iv, 123; Lucan, I, 565; Tertullian, "*Apologia*," ix; Lactantius, I, xxi, 16; Minucius Felix, "*Octavius*," xxx, 5. The votaries of Bellona on their mystic festivals, especially the great solemnity, 20 March, gashed their limbs till they dripped and gushed with blood. Hence, as Trebellius Pollio tells us (*Diuus Claudius*, 4), this date was known as "*dies sanguinis*."

‡ "*Antistius Labeo*." The celebrated jurist who lived about the beginning of the Christian era, 54 B.C. to A.D. 17. He was the founder of a great legal school at Rome. There was another Labeo, Cornelius, whose writings are often quoted by Macrobius. S. Augustine at times hardly distinguishes the two, and indeed they may have been the same person.

bloodshed and torture, while the good delighted in joyful ceremonies, such as feasts and banquets.

I would not have anyone conclude from this that I consider the Kingdom of Christ to consist in luxuries and pleasures, for I know that the chief token of His service is the Cross. But I would have men understand that such self-torture as I have described is not altogether to be taken as a proof of piety when it is done in the public and ostentatious manner too frequently practised. For it is in this way that Satan most often sets his stage; doubtless because he sees Christians mortifying themselves with fasts, vigils, solitude and labour when they would conquer the flesh, or when they do voluntary penance for their sins, or when they prepare themselves for prayer and holy meditation. For Satan in malice often copies their example, and extends it even to such excessive self-torture, as if, forsooth, a man's piety could be measured by the violence with which he attacks his own body: such is the guile and cunning of the Evil One. In this manner by some immoderation and excess he parodies, distorts and defiles even the most holy practices. But it must not be thought that I intend a word against the true and sincere discipline of Christians, or to criticize anything which has the approval of the Church.

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## CHAPTER X

*The essential Filthiness of Demons is proved by the Fact that their Appearance is always accompanied by a Loathsome Stench; and that they so carefully instruct their Subjects to Avoid all Cleanliness, especially of the Hands, the Washing of which is a Hindrance to Witchcraft. And how this should be Understood.*

**I**N the Holy Scriptures the Devil is constantly referred to as Behemoth, that is to say, "the impure animal and

the unclean spirit" (see S. Gregory, in *Memorabilia*, Matthew xii, Mark i and v, Job xl). It is not only because the Devil is, as all his actions and purposes show, impure in his nature and character that we should consider this name to be aptly applied to him; but also because he takes immoderate delight in external filth and uncleanness. For often he makes his abode in dead bodies; and if he occupies a living body, or even if he forms himself a body out of the air or a condensation of vapours, his presence therein is always betrayed by some notably foul and noisome stench. Most often, indeed, he dwells in those parts of the body which, like the bilge of ships, harbour the excremental waste of the body. Consequently the Pythoness woman in the Bible is called a ventriloquist,\* which, as Gratian points out in his *Decretals*, means "speaking from the stomach." The gifts of the Demon also are fashioned from ordure and dung, and his banquets from the flesh of beasts that have died. According to the proverb, like cleaveth to like; or, as it is commonly said, like master like man; and so the Devil for the most part has for his servants filthy old hags whose age and poverty serve but to enhance their foulness; and these, as being of a vitiated nature most apt to his purpose, he instructs in all impurity and uncleanness.

Above all he cautions them not to wash their hands, as it is the habit of other men to do in the morning; for he tells them that to do so constitutes a sure obstruction to his incantations. This is the case whether it is the witches themselves who wash their

\* "Ventriloquist." The Witch of Endor is described as the possessor of an "ōbh," a familiar spirit. The LXX translates this word "ōbh" by ἑγγαστράμβος, perhaps because of the belief in antiquity that ventriloquism was not a natural faculty, but due to the temporary obsession of the medium by a spirit. See "The History of Witchcraft" by Montague Summers, chapter v, "The Witch in Holy Writ."



as we learn from the answer given to her examiners by Alexia of Betoncourt at Mirecourt in December 1584, and by countless others whose names I have not now time to mention; or whether it is the intended means of their witchcraft who wash their hands, as was stated by Claude Faut (Mersuay, February 1587) and Catharina Latomia (Haraucourt, February 1587). The former of those women harboured a grudge against Dominique Duranta because they both wished to wed the same man; and the second nursed a vindictive hatred of the Malurtica because, being neighbours, they had almost daily quarrels and contentions: but neither of them could by their spells or poisons satisfy their desire for vengeance, because their would-be victims were protected against their charms by this washing of their hands. Sebastienne Maxent (Laach, April 1588), Jana Schwartz (Laach, March 1588), Joanna Ulrichs (Lanfracourt, May 1588), and Françoise Perine (Bains-les-Bains, June 1588) affirmed that this ablution is a sure protection against evil spells, provided that when a man leaves his house he also commits himself with prayer to the safe-keeping of God. The hag Schwartz added that she had learned this fact from her Little Master, Joliet, when she was expostulating with him because she had repeatedly failed to injure the wife of Nicolas Calvé with the very poisons which she had used with immediate effect against many others. To this cause, also, the woman Ulrichs attributed her failure to rid herself by witchcraft of her husband; for she tried many times to do this, because of the repulsion and loathing she felt for him as a bed-fellow. And quite recently (at Essey, June 1591), when Mugeta was about to be burned at the stake and was supping for the last time with her husband, she calmly warned him in the hearing of many people never to leave his house in the morning without commending himself to God and washing his hands, if

he wished to be safe and secure from the charms of witches.

How it is that so slight a matter carries such potency, or why it should be of more importance in this respect to wash the hands than any other part of the body, it is not easy to guess. It may be that that Impostor uses this cunning pretext to cover a different design, and by tortuous and winding methods attain his purpose for us. Jean Bodin quotes an example of this from Wier, where the Demon most strictly enjoined a certain witch to keep a pair of old shoes, telling her that they would be a protection to her against the threatened malevolence of another witch; for it cannot be doubted that his reason for thus warning her was that she might continue to wallow in the mire of sin, which bears some likeness to muddy shoes. For this cause also Philo Judaeus would have it understood that God commanded Moses to put off his shoes when he approached Him.

It is certain that among the Egyptians water was the symbol of purity, and that they believed that lustrations and expiations were most effective when accompanied by its use. And it was frequently used in the rites and ceremonies of the Pagans; for we read in the Second Book of the *Aeneid*, 717-720:

Do thou, my father, hold the sacred vessels.

For me, so late returned from bloody war,

'Twere crime to touch them till I purify

My body in the living stream.

And in the Fourth Book (635), when Dido summons her sister Anna as to the holy rites she says to the old nurse:

Bid her at once go purify her body  
With river water.

And in the Sixth Book (636), Aeneas  
Sprinkles pure fresh water o'er his  
body.



And the old man in Horace (*Satires*, II) who went about the streets asking the Gods for immortality always washed his hands in the morning. Hesiod also, in his *Works and Days* (336), forbids a man to pour a morning libation to Jove, or even to enter any river or spring, with unwashed hands. In Homer,\* before Telemachus made his supplication to Pallas he washed his hands in sea water. The law of God in the Old Testament frequently commends such external cleansing with water, especially of the hands; and we read that this was a custom much used by the Jews, who, when they sacrificed a heifer, washed their hands over it (*Deuteronomy*, xxi). For clean hands, such as should always be raised to God (I. *Timothy* 1), are the symbol of a pure heart. And proverbially we speak of a man washing his hands to signify his guiltlessness; as Pilate did publicly to testify his innocence (*Matthew* xxvii). And conversely, the Jews tried to bring the disciples of Christ into ill repute because they sat down to eat with unwashed hands. I do not know whether it was for the sake of avoiding a cause of offence that S. Peter changed that custom after Christ's Passion: for S. Clement, his friend and almost daily companion, has left written record that he seldom sat down without washing (Valerius Pierius,† *Hieroglyphica*, XXI, cap. 33).

\* "Homer." "Odyssey," II, 260-61:

Τηλέμαχος δ' ἀπάνευθε κίων ἐπὶ θίνα θαλάσσης,  
Χεῖρας νυψάμενος πολέης ἁλός, εὖχετ' Ἀθήνη·

† "Pierius." The best editions of the "*Hieroglyphica*" of Valerius Pierius are generally considered to be the folio, Lyons, 1602; and the quarto, Lyons, 1610.



## CHAPTER XI

*That Witches, just as they are said to have done in Ancient Heathen Days, make yearly Offerings to their Demons for the purpose either of Averting the Menace of Blows, or of Winning Exemption from the less Pleasant of the Duties to which they are Pledged by their Pact. And that such Offerings, when they are Animals, must be entirely Black.*

EVEN as earthly Lords and Masters exact yearly payments either in labour or money from their vassals whom they permit to use and enjoy their property, so is the Devil most strict to exact from his subjects, on the day due for their fulfilment, prompt payment of the pledges by which they have formally contracted to enter his service: especially if they have cause to seek exemption from any payment, such as an excuse from presenting themselves at the nocturnal feasting and dancing, or from any similar obligation. Dominique Zabella (of Rogeville in the Tendon district, 1583) reported that such payments in lieu of service were most commonly made by the more wealthy witches: for she said that she had seen very many of them not only gain the favour of their Little Masters, but even avert the threatened penalty when they had fallen short of what had been required of them, by sacrificing a steer or a wether, or by offering some other customary gift; and that they even purchase exemption from attendance at the appointed time and place of the Sabbat. This is confirmed by Didier Finance of Mandray, who freely confessed at Saint-Dié on the 14th July, 1581, that he was under compulsion to make some such offering to his Little Master late in the evening of a certain day, which fell every year about the rising of the Dog Star, at a certain place upon Donon, which is a very steep mountain in the Vosges; and that such offering was not acceptable unless it was entirely black.

That it is no new thing for Satan to affect this colour is clearly shown by all the Histories. Plutarch (*De oraculum defectu*, 145) says that when, under the name of Mopsus,\* he gave utterance to oracles, and a certain Proconsul of Asia sent letters to ask whether he would rather that a white or black calf were sacrificed to him, he answered that he preferred the black one. That it was the custom to consult Demons in this manner by means of written letters and inscriptions upon wax is shown by the following from Juvenal, X, 55:

Meet is it, then, to place our waxen tablets  
On the Gods' knees.

And Alexander ab Alexandro (*Genialium Dierum*, III, 22) says that the decrees of blind antiquity forbade the priest to sacrifice any but black victims to Dis and the gods of the nether world. So in the Sabbat described by Horace (*Sermonum*, I, 8, 26-27) the witches Canidia and Sagana

clawed the earth up,  
And tore a black lamb with their teeth.

No doubt the reason is, as Pythagoras writes, that this colour has some kinship with evil; and it is appropriate that what is dedicated and sacrificed to the author and instigator of all evil should be black in colour. Beatrix of Bayon (Gerbeville, August 1585) added that not even the poorer witches, who form the majority of that sect, are immune from such obligatory payments; but that everyone had to give to the utmost of her means in sign of her vassalage, and this she saw done at Moyenmoutier on 17th February, 1589. Some give black cocks or hens, as Desirée Paray of the district of Etival

\* "Mopsus." Son of Apollo and Manto, the daughter of Tiresias. He was a celebrated seer. In conjunction with the prophet Amphilochus he founded Mallos in Cilicia. Here in later days he had an oracle, which still existed in the time of Strabo.

(in November 1589), and Cathelon Vincent, Catharine Praevotte and Apollonie, of Freissen, in September 1589) stated that they gave. Some pluck the hair from their heads, or present a straw or a little bird or some such small gift, it may be coins made from ox-hide. These gifts, however insufficient, are accepted by the Demons; for it is enough, as Johann Fischer said that he had often been told by his Little Master, if they bring a willing and conscientious spirit. But if any of them refuses or omits to make some payment, she immediately incurs threats, blows, sickness, the death of her children, household loss, or some signal disaster. For fear, then, of such consequences, their promptness in fulfilling such obligations is greater than I can say, since their diligence and zeal is so stimulated by terror and dread.

The very same spur pricked the breasts of the ancients, their minds were tainted with the same erroneous belief, although they were not bound by the terms and conditions of a previous agreement. Reference is made by Cicero, *De Legibus*, II, 11; Pliny, II, 7; Alexander ab Alexandro, I, 13; and Volterra,† *Philologia, De celebratione Sacrorum*, XXIX, to the following facts:—At Rome on the Palatine Hill there stood an old altar to Fever. On the Esquiline there was another to Detestable Ill-fortune. Near the Temple of Orbona‡ there were shrines to the

† "Volterra." Raphael Maffei, more generally known as Raphael Volaterranus, born at Volterra in 1451, died at Rome 1522. His life was devoted to study, and Tiraboschi says his learning was only equalled by his piety. His most important work, "*Commentariorum urbanorum libri*," XXXVIII, was reprinted several times during the sixteenth century. His glosses on the "*Malleus Maleficarum*" were printed with that work, 8vo, 1576.

‡ "Orbona." An ancient Italian goddess who by slaying children rendered parents childless. She was invoked to avert her wrath in "*Indigitamenta*," the mystic priestly books. Cicero, "*De Natura Deorum*," III, 25, 63, speaks of her sanctuary on the Via Sacra.

deities *Postvorta*,\* *Prorsa*,† *Apprehension*, *Fear*, the *Averter*,‡ *Robigo*§ the bringer of blight; and other noxious deities whom you may call by the common name of *Veioves*,|| whose altars were much famed in other parts of Rome: these were propitiated with gifts that they might not prove obstructive or cause some inconvenience. The same superstition was widespread among the Greeks and other nations. Thus the Athenians sacrificed to the gods of Contumely and Shamelessness, lest they should be afflicted with those vices: the Boeotians to Apollo *Pornopion*,¶ lest their province should be

infested with mice: the Oetaeans to Hercules *Conopios*,\*\* lest they should be plagued with gnats: the Rhodians to Apollo *Erythibios*,†† lest their crops should be afflicted with the blight; and the men of Gades performed the most solemn rites to Poverty and Old Age, that they might not press too hardly upon them.

Would God that so fanatical and insane an error had not permeated our own times; that so great a madness had not depraved our own divine rites and ceremonies! Oh, that men would reflect (as Cicero long ago rightly admonished us) that our ceremonial worship of God is demanded not in fear, or in fulfilment of a pact, or as a price to be paid; but is chiefly to be observed for the sake of that communion which exists between God and man, with piety and devotion which are of all things acceptable to God and firmly establish His abiding place with men!

Persius writes (*Sat.* II, 73-74):

A mind composed to right, the holy thoughts  
Of my own soul, a pure and noble heart,

(For to invoke the help and mercy of God without bringing such gifts is manifestly absurd.)

With these I may approach the sacred temples;  
And all my sacrifice is common meal.

The image of a mouse stood beside Apollo's tripod in his temple in the Troad, and white mice lived under his altar. So the Bohemian peasants to-day carefully keep white mice as a charm against their kin who ravage the fields.

\*\* "*Conopios*." κώνωψ ("culex"), the gnat or mosquito.

†† "*Erythibios*." Apollo, protector of crops from blight. Strabo, XIII, i, 64; Eustathius on Homer, "*Iliad*," I, 39; Dittenberger's "*Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*" (second edition), No. 609, Vol. II, p. 386.

\* "*Postvorta*." According to Varro (apud Gellius, XVI, 16, 4), a goddess presiding over childbirth, who was invoked when the child made the wrong presentation. According to Macrobius, "*Somnium Scipionis*," I, 7, a goddess presiding over the future, as opposed to *Antevorta*.

† "*Prorsa*." The goddess presiding over births with the head foremost. Varro ut supra.

‡ "*The Averter*." *Auerruncus* "*Auertendo*. *Auerruncare*, ut deus, qui eis rebus praestet *Auerruncus*." Varro, "*De Lingua Latina*."

§ "*Robigo*." According to Ovid, "*Fasti*," IV, 907; Tertullian, "*De Spectaculis*," XV; and Lactantius, I, xx, 17, a female deity. Often *Robigus*, considered as a god. See Varro, "*De Lingua Latina*," vi; "*De Re Rustica*," I, i, 6; Servius on Vergil, "*Georgics*," I, 151.

|| "*Veioves*." From "*ue*" (sometimes "*uae*"), an inseparable particle denoting "out" (perhaps = Sanscrit "*vi-in*," "*vi-dha-va*"); Latin, "*uidua*"), which serves to negative the idea of the simple word or to strengthen a simple privative notion (e.g. "*uegrandis*," small; "*uepallidus*," very pale): and *Jou-*; of Jupiter. Properly "*anti-Jove*." *Veiovis* was an Etruscan deity, a god of the underworld, whose power to injure corresponded to that of Jupiter to help. He was worshipped at Rome, where his temple stood in the hollow between the *Arx* and the *Capitol*.

¶ "*Pornopion*." Apollo *Smintheus*, for whom see Homer, "*Iliad*," I, 39, with the Scholia and gloss of Eustathius; Strabo, XIII, i, 48 and 63; Aelian, "*De natura animalium*," XII, 5; Clement of Alexandria, "*Protrepticus*," II, 39 (p. 34, ed. Potter); Pausanias, X, 12, 5.



And Horace (*Carminum*, III, 23, 17-20):

Let but the hand on the altar be innocent,

And 'twill appease the angry Penates  
With pious meal and sparkling salt.

Here I will not dwell upon those who call upon the Gods by name, and brazenly and openly beg them to grant their particular wishes:

By slaughtering an ox you hope to prosper,  
And o'er its entrails pray to Mercury:  
"Grant me good fortune, grant me  
that my flock  
And herds may be prolific."

Or those who would avert some feared misfortune, as in Vergil (*Aeneid*, VIII, 556-7):

In dread, the mothers multiplied their  
vows,  
And as the danger neared, their fear  
increased.

Often, indeed, men grow indignant and load their Gods with insults and revilings because they had trusted that, after they had made offerings to them, they would be favourable and propitious to them. Thus it is said that a certain Italian gamester, because he had lost in his gaming, cursed all his Gods except S. Antony \* (of whose sacred fire he stood in considerable fear); and on the next day he offered wax candles to each of them as a suppliant to atone for his blasphemies, but purposely passed by the altar of S. Antony, saying: "It is beyond measure just that thou, whom I have provoked with no insult, shouldst not now receive from me any propitiatory offering."

But perhaps it were better to say no more on this subject, since it is hardly suitable for an ecclesiastic to discuss; especially when it is considered that

\* "S. Antony." *Eremita*; the Great. S. Antony's fire is *erysipelas*.

the impiety of such conduct is abundantly clear of itself, and has no need of emphasis by a preacher. It is enough to have shown that:

The meanest gift serves to appease the  
Heavenly Powers,  
If piously a man confess his sins.

☆

## CHAPTER XII

*That when Witches mean to Fly to their Sabbath, they Dupe the Jealousy of their Husbands by Charming them into a deep Sleep, or by Substituting some Object in their own Likeness to take their Place.*

AS I was writing this there came into my hands the statements of certain prisoners at Forbach (a township of Lorraine in Hither Germany), from which I learned for the first time that when witches are about to fly from their husbands' beds to their assemblies, it is their practice, in order to prevent their husbands from noting any departure from their ordinary daily and nightly habits, to charm them by their spells into a sleep from which they cannot easily be aroused; or else to lay beside them as they are buried in repose some dummy in their likeness, which their husbands should, if they happened to awake, imagine to be their wives. Bertrande Barbier admitted that she had often done this; and that, to sink her husband in such a sleep, she had many times tweaked his ear after having with her right hand anointed it with the same ointment which she used upon herself when she wished to be transported to the Sabbath. Eller, the wife of an officer at Ottingen, said that she had substituted in her place a child's pillow, and Sinchen May of Speirchen some twigs, after they had invoked the name of their Demons; and in this manner they had often deceived their husbands. Maria, the wife of Johann Schneider of Metzerech, used a bundle



of straw anointed with her ointment, which used to vanish as soon as she herself had returned to the house. Catharina Ruffa declared that her Demon had himself at times taken her place in the bed.



### CHAPTER XIII

*That there are many Faults for which the Demons bring Witches to task with the utmost Severity: such as Failure to attend the Nocturnal Assemblies; the Healing of Diseases without Permission; suffering an injury to be unavenged; Failure to do Evil; Stubbornness; dissuading another from Wrongdoing; confessing their Guilt to a Judge; using their Spells without Success; and very many other Shortcomings of this Kind. For these they are punished with the most Savage Beating, or else they must atone for them by some Serious Loss of their own Goods.*

IF there is one supreme and enduring cause of offence, it is that which arises from envy, which (as Cicero says) is by far the bitterest and most abiding of all motives. And if this be true of mankind, what can we but think its influence will be with Satan, who has no greater care or anxiety than to be ever seeking some fresh calamity or misery wherewith to afflict mankind, because their condition in life is to some degree more fortunate than his own? It should not, then, appear wonderful that once he has gained power and authority over any man, he should prove so hard a master and treat him so cruelly and unmercifully. It is, indeed, the perpetual complaint of such that he never fails to invent reasons for imputing some fault or contumacy to them, and for blaming and severely punishing them; and that never, even for a single moment, does he allow them any peace.

At Altweier in January 1585, Kuno Gugnot testified that, because he was sometimes late and sometimes infre-

quent in his attendance at the Sabbat, he had more than once been beaten almost to death by the Demon. Another time he paid a heavy penalty because, without asking permission, he had dared to restore to health the daughter of Dominique Ray, to whom, at the Demon's instigation, he had given poison. But by far his most terrifying experience was when the Demon carried him through the air and set him down over the river Moselle in a precipitous place full of peril by reason of the rapids; and did not cease from threatening to cast him down and drown him, until he promised to poison Desiderius Galerius, with whom he was at enmity; and not long afterwards he was compelled, by the Demon's strictest commands, to do that deed.

Jeanne Gerardine (at Ville-sur-Moselle, June 1587), Catharine Ruffa (at Pagny-sur-Moselle, Nov. 1584), and Françoise Fellet affirmed that they had often been punished for their neglect of wrongdoing: and, according to Nicole Morèle (at Serre, January 1587), the punishment was so severe that her breath was taken away and she almost died. And she added that this need not seem surprising; for the Demon had hands of iron with which he so pounded their heads that it seemed to those who felt them that they had been deprived of their bones. Alexée Belheure (Blainville, Feb. 1587) and Claude Morèle (at Serre, Dec. 1586) complained that they had, to their great hurt, very often experienced the like punishment. And sometimes he so flies in their face with his talons that he leaves it all rent and torn; as Rosa Gerardine, of the Etival district, in November 1586, made manifest to the Judge by showing the scars which she yet bore.

The Demon put every pressure upon the same Belheure to poison her husband. But when, for love of him, she would not do this, he was infuriated by her refusal and afflicted her with

the dropsy; and she suffered from that swelling for six whole months, and did not recover until her feet were lanced and eighteen pints of the most stinking matter were drawn off.

He did not cease to urge Margareta Luodman (Vergaville, Jan. 1587) to poison her neighbour's cow which had eaten all her cabbages and trodden down all her garden; and gave her some poison on a wooden platter for that purpose. But she shrank from doing it because she feared that her neighbour, whom she knew to be a very shrewd woman, would detect her in the crime. At last, therefore, in order to free herself of that obligation and so that she might at any cost appease her Little Master, she chose rather to kill with the same poison the one steer which she had in her own stable. Bertrande Barbier (Forpach, Aug. 1587) was also compelled to pay by the loss of her own cattle for sparing those of another against the command of her Little Master.

With the utmost importunacy the Demon drove Apollonie (of Freissen, Aug. 1587) to promise that she would never rest until she had done some great injury to the family of her fellow-townsmen Eysart. But she was unable to fulfil her promise; for she was prevented by God, into whose care and protection Eysart used to entrust himself and his family at the dawning of every day. At last she was driven to the necessity of appeasing the Demon's vexation at her failure to keep her promise by the murder of her ten-year-old daughter, whose name was Eugel. Another Demon imposed the same compulsion to kill her own offspring upon Catharine Praevote (in Freissen, Sept. 1589). For she had conceived a violent desire to poison the only daughter of her neighbour Michael Koch, and had many times tried to do so, but without success; for the child's father kept her safe from evil spells by means of daily prayers and lustrations. At last, as the Demon kept complaining that he

was being balked of his prey, the heartless mother did not flinch from compensating him over and above by poisoning her own infant son, Odilo.

It is, in fact, an immutable law that, if witches have failed in their attempt to injure another, they must themselves become the victims of their intended malice; for the Demon never permits his designs to fail for lack of some object. And if several witches together have made an attempt, and there is a question as to which of them shall bear the brunt of their failure, the matter is decided by lot, and she upon whom it falls must pay the penalty for them all. The same Praevote states that this course was once taken by herself and her associates in crime. "For," she said, "we had plotted together to bewitch the flocks of a cobbler of Freissen, but for some reason or other we were thwarted in our attempt. Nevertheless, something had to be achieved, so that by some means he might be satisfied who was confidently awaiting his prey. We decided, therefore, to draw lots to determine which of us should suffer for it; and the lot fell upon Agnes Eyswitz, the vilest and wickedest woman of us all. And she, without in the least shrinking from the atrocity of the deed, with the greatest readiness and in the presence of her companions gave a poisoned drink to her twenty-year-old son, named Peter, in consequence of which his whole body was not long after marvellously distorted and disfigured." Without doubt she was constrained either to do this or else herself to suffer an even more painful death at the hands of the Demon, who never condones any failure.

In the same way Balial Basle (of St. Nicolas-de-Port near Dombasle-sur-Meurthe, March 1587) did not persist in his contumacy with impunity. For because he neglected to obey the Demon's command to poison a certain man whom he bitterly hated, he suffered such terrible punishment in his own house that (as he said) he

would rather die at once than have to endure the like torments again.

Neither did that Margarita, whom we have just mentioned, escape the vengeance of the Demon for having dissuaded her fellow-witches from their malice, when they had met together by the pool of Wapenbruch and, following their usual practice, were beating the water with the intent to destroy the fruits of the trees. Her reason was that she remembered that, thanks to that fruit, she had more than once been able to endure a long and severe famine. But the Demon so terribly railed against her, and moreover beat her so cruelly, that she soon changed her mind and agreed to that act of destruction.

At Meinfeld, in January 1586, Jeanne le Ban, confounded by the weight of the evidence against her and moved by fear of the threatened torture, confessed to the Judge all her crimes and witchcraft, and, repeating the words after the Judge, bade depart for ever the Demon to which she was subject. But not long afterwards the Demon found her alone in her prison, and so pounded and kicked her that she thought her last day had come. However, the gaolers opportunely intervened and prevented him from carrying his savage fury any farther. It is a fact that her whole back was still discoloured with the marks of recent blows when she reported this occurrence to the Magistrate. For the same reason, the frank confession of her guilt, Otilla Kellers (Freissen, Aug. 1590) was so fiercely beaten in prison by her Little Master that her cries were heard a very long way off by the Castellan's servants.

See how very harsh and unjust a master is the Devil, even to those who have surrendered themselves entirely to his will: whereas Christ ever teaches that His yoke is easy and His burden light, and urges those who would have rest for their souls to take it upon them. It is, indeed, but meet that two such opposite systems of service should

be absolutely contrary in their purposes and results. The supreme law of Christ is love born of faith, and since He gathered us into His church, He has given us no more sacred command than this; in *S. John* xiii. 34: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." Again, in verse 35: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This commandment is not hard to obey; it is full of love, joy and happiness. And if we fall short in our observance of it, God does not at once pour forth His wrath upon our stubbornness, but is slow to punish and loath to chastise. And if He must punish, His punishment is moderate and always salutary, that of a father rather than of a master; arising from the love of Him who chastiseth, not from the avenger's hate. The precepts and commands of the Devil, on the contrary, are always concerned with envy, treachery, cruelty, slaughter, loss and wrong. See *S. John* viii and *Revelations* xii. For from the beginning he was a murderer, a calumniator, robber, destroyer, traitor, tormentor and slaughterer. And his chief desire and object is that his subjects should, like himself, busy themselves to procure the misery and misfortune of others. If his followers disobey him or hesitate to perform his bidding, the consequence is, as has been said, that they are beaten and pounded even to death; and if they obey his behests, they are wretchedly involved in continual misery and anguish; just as they who, against their natural tenderness of heart, are compelled by their duty to be witnesses of bloody and revolting spectacles. Moreover, pity, which is the first of human instincts, the fear of arrest, and the consciousness of their sins never allow them to be of calm and easy mind; but they are for ever the victims of distress, evil impulses, misery and calamity.



## CHAPTER XIV

*That Witches do often really and in fact Travel to their Nocturnal Synagogues; and often again such Journeyings are but an Empty Imagination begotten of Dreams; and that they are equally right who support either of these Opinions. Further, that these Journeys are performed in Various Manners; and on what Nights they most commonly take place in Lorraine.*

THERE is much controversy and dissension among those who treat of this aspect of witchcraft; as to whether witches do in fact fly to and bodily present themselves at the notorious evil assemblies of Demons, or whether they are only possessed by some fantastic delusion, and, as happens when the empty mind is filled with dreams at night, merely imagine that they are so present. There are good arguments and examples in support of both sides in this dispute. Credible authors such as Fr. à Turella,\* and Jean Bodin in his *Daemonomania*, have vouched for cases where women have manifestly spent the whole night at home, and even in bed with their husbands, and yet on the next morning they have confidently recounted many details of the Sabbath at which they have affirmed they were present on the previous night. Other women, again, have been kept under express observation throughout the night by their friends and relations, as well as their neighbours, who had become suspicious of them because of certain rumours; and they have been seen to move spasmodically in their

sleep as if they were smitten with some acute pain; or even to mount upon a chair or some other object and act as if they were spurring a horse to great speed: yet they did not go out of the house, but on awaking appeared as weary as if they had returned from a long journey, and told wonderful stories of what they imagined they had done, and were much offended and angry with those who would not believe them. For these reasons many have been led to believe that the Sabbats are no more than dreams and visions sent by the Demon into the minds of those whom he has snared in his net. This opinion has not a few supporters of great weight; and S. Jerome does not dissent from it where his only reason for quoting the argument of a certain Jew of his time, who fallaciously adduced the authority of the story of Habakkuk (*Daniel* xiv, 32-38), was to show that the transportment and transvection of the Prophet through the air was a miracle and outside the laws of nature.

On the other side there is no lack of well-reputed authors, for example, Ulrich Molitor† and Jean Bodin, who, both by argument and examples, maintain the literal truth of this matter. For (they say) they have heard the evidence of those who have smeared and rubbed themselves with the same ointment‡ that witches use,

† "Ulrich Molitor." This writer was born at Constance, where he died in 1492. He was a doctor both of Roman and Canon Law, and procurator in the Episcopal curia at Constance. Upon the request of Archduke Sigismund of the Tyrol he wrote a treatise, "*De Laniis [sic] et Phitonicis mulieribus, Tractatus pulcherrimus.*" According to Stanislaus de Guaita the first edition is 4to, 1465. There were several reprints before the end of the century, and German translations appeared in 1544 and 1575. It is quite an error to suppose that Molitor denied the existence of witches, in fact he insists upon this, although he states that there is much deception, and much extravagance in popular belief.

‡ "Ointment." De Lancre, "*Tableau de l'Inconstance,*" II, Discours I, says: "*Les*

\* "Turella." Pierre Turrel, a French philosopher and astrologer, was born at Autun in the second half of the fifteenth century, and died at Dijon, where he was Rector of the Schools during the second decade of the sixteenth century. He is the author of a very curious work upon the influence of the Heavenly Bodies, "*La Période, c'est à dire la Fin du Monde,*" 1531.



and have in a moment been carried with them to the Sabbath; though it cost them many days' journey to return from it when, as Apuleius says, the song was done and the blind force of conjured Powers was expended. They have heard also of those who have gone on foot to the Sabbath with their children, whom they meant to initiate at the solemn assembly, and were afterwards carried home through the air by the Demon.\* Many, again, have stated in evidence that they have spoken to persons on their outward journey and met them again on their return late at night, when they gave astonishing and perplexing answers to their questions. Then there are the conversations at the Sabbath itself, which have afterwards been reported in identical words by different persons who were present. There are cases of the recognition of the masks, disguises and veils with which each witch covers her face to conceal her identity; and of the vessels, garments and furniture

used at the Sabbath. Joachim† records such instances. Their shouts and cries have been heard by shepherds keeping their flocks near by. There are the dummies which the women have left by their husbands to take their place in their own absence. In short there are very many of those who have joined that pestilential sect who agree in their statements and evidence on all these matters; and I have thought good to select the following example, as being most pertinent to the matter in question, and report it rather more fully.

In May 1589 the inhabitants were holding a carnival at Lützen, a not inconsiderable town at the foot of the Vosges. A man named Claude Choteau was returning at nightfall from there to a neighbouring village called Wisembach, and had climbed the better part of the hill which stands between the two places, when he was suddenly pulled up by a violent whirlwind. He looked about in astonishment and could see no reason for such an unusual happening, for everywhere else it was perfectly calm. Then he observed in a retired corner, locally known as Morèle, six masked women dancing around a table laid with much gold and silver, tossing their heads like mad women; and near them was a man sitting upon a black bull watching them as if he were some casual passer-by. He stood still for a little, therefore, to collect himself and observe it all more closely; but they instantly disappeared and vanished from his sight. So, recovering from his fright, he resumed his journey and had passed the top of the hill, when behold! those women were following him behind, tossing their heads about as

*liures et les Inquisiteurs diset, que les sorciers composent et font ces onguens ou graisses, ou que le Diable les leur donne: Que la plus part se font avec de la graisse de petit enfant que Satan faict occire à des sorcières. Mais ils tiennent que ces onguents ne peuvent servir en ce cas à autre effect, que pour assoupir les sens des sorciers, afin que Satan iouisse mieux à son aise d'eux." Weyer, "De Lamiis," III, 17, writes: "De naturalibus pharmaci somniferis, quibus interdum illuduntur Lamiae, de earum item unguentis, et quibusdam plantis soporiferis, mentemque impense turbantibus." In his opinion the ointments of witches are toxic, producing excitement and delirium, or narcotic, awakening evil dreams. "Lamiarum quoque unguentum propemodum simile tradit Hieronymus Cardanus, post cuius inunctionem mirabilia uideri apparet."*

\* In many confessions it is said that they walked to the rendezvous, and De Lancre in dealing with such cases decides: "It is truly as criminal and abominable for a Sorcerer to go to the Sabbath on foot as to be voluntarily conveyed thither by the Devil." See Montague Summers, "The History of Witchcraft" (1926), chapter 10, pp. 118-133.

† "Joachim" Camerarius, born at Bamberg in 1500, died at Leipzig in 1574. The real name (which he Latinized) of this celebrated scholar was Liebhard or Kammermeister, sometimes spelt Camer-Meister. The present reference is to his "De natura et affectionibus demonum libelli duo Plutarchi Cheronensis cum explicationibus." Lipsiae, 1576, octavo.

before, and preserving as if by agreement a profound silence. Before them went a man with a black face and hands curved like hooks, with which the horrid apparition would have rent and clawed his face if he had not drawn his sword and defended himself. But on his doing that, the man ceased to threaten him, and disappeared like one in fear for his life. (This supports the contention of Plato and Psellus and certain academic philosophers that Demons are susceptible to and afraid of threats, blows, cuts and wounds. This matter we deal with elsewhere.) Nevertheless, those women showed themselves again, and with them the man who, as I said, was sitting upon a bull and watching their dance. To him Choteau, growing bolder, went up and said: "What! Are you here, friend Desiré Gaxet?" (For that was his name.) "I beg you to protect me if you can: for I solemnly promise that I will never speak of anything which I have seen." Hardly had he said this, when he was again caught up in a whirlwind or cloud; and when he at last got free from it he found himself alone on the ground far away from the road; but he found his way back to it and returned home as quickly as he could. Three days after giving evidence of this he was again summoned before the Judge and added to his former statement the following: that he remembered that, when he had gone near to the table to see what sort of a banquet was there set out, the Demon had immediately flown at his face with his claws; and that while he was defending himself with his sword he had been lifted up by a violent wind and carried to the cataracts of Combri-mons, not less than two hundred paces away. And lest anyone should put this story down to the ravings of a drunken man frightened by the loneliness of the night and the place, Barbette Gaxet, one of those six women, had the month before told the same story to the Judge in almost the same words; adding that

Desiré Gaxet and his wife had given Choteau two measures of corn and two cheeses of cow's milk as the price of his silence about what he had seen. And when he and she were brought face to face, they agreed in all respects except only that Barbette said that the reason that the Demon had attacked Choteau was not, as he had falsely said, that he had approached near the table, but that he had tried to steal a gold cup from it.

Here is another similar instance. Johann von Hembach had hardly grown to manhood when his witch mother took him with her to the nocturnal assembly of Demons. And, because he was skilled in its use, she bade him play the flute, and climb a tree\* near by that he might the better be heard. This he did; and having leisure to observe their dances, and struck with wonder at the uncommon manner of them (for everything there was preposterous and ridiculous), he exclaimed: "Good God! where did this crowd of fools and madmen come from?" Scarcely had he said this when he fell to the ground and was hurt in one shoulder, and when he called upon them to help him, he found himself alone. This adventure he openly proclaimed; and while various opinions were being expressed concerning it, some maintaining that it was a vision, and others that it had really happened, it so happened after a little that all doubt was removed. For one of the women who had joined in that dance, Catharina Prevotte, was soon afterwards taken up at Freissen in September 1589 on suspicion of witchcraft, and recounted the whole matter as it has already been told, although she was as yet unaware that Hembach had been spreading the story, and without

\* "Climb a tree." This instance is also related by Guazzo. See "*Compendium Maleficarum*," I, xii (see the translation published by John Rodker, 1929, p. 45). On p. 37 a woodcut shows the dance with the fiddler seated in a tree.

having been previously questioned concerning it. Otilia Kellers (at Werdenst, Aug. 1590) and Anguel Eysartz (at Dieuze, Dec. 1590), who were found guilty of witchcraft in the following year, severally told the same story, adding weight to their evidence by naming the place, Mayebuch, where it happened.

The following is no less pertinent to the subject. As Nicolette Lang-Bernhard was returning from the old mill of Guermingen to Assenoncour on the 25th July, 1590, and was going along a forest path at high noon, she saw in a field near by a band of men and women dancing round in a ring. But because they were doing so in a manner contrary to the usual practice, with their backs turned towards each other, she looked more closely and saw also dancing around with the others some whose feet were deformed and like those of goats or oxen. Nearly dead with fright, she began (as we do when some sinister disaster threatens us) to call upon the saving Name of Jesus,\* and to beseech Him that she might at least return safe and unhurt to her house. Thereupon all the dancers seemed to vanish at once, except one named Petter Gross-Petter, who rose quickly into the air, and was seen to let fall a mop such as bakers use to clean out their ovens before putting in their dough. Meanwhile Nicolette was caught in a violent gale so that she could hardly breathe; and after she had reached home she lay ill in bed for three whole days. When Nicolette

and her neighbours had spread the story of this through all the village, it seemed to Petter that to keep silent would be tantamount to a confession of guilt; so he went straight and laid a mighty bitter complaint before the Judge; but in the end, fearing that if, as appeared probable, he should lose his case, he would be exposing himself to even greater danger, he purposely broke off and desisted from it. But this did but the more increase suspicion against him, many considering that it was due to his conscience of guilt that he now bore in silence an accusation which he had at first bitterly resented. Accordingly, the Judge inquired all the more carefully into his life and habits and, finding sure indications that the suspicions against him were not baseless, ordered him to be laid by the heels. He was then with no great difficulty induced to confess his crime, and finally to name and make known others who had been his partners in it. Among these were Barbelia the wife of Joannes Latomus, and Mayetta the wife of Laurentius the Chief Magistrate (who were tried at Dieuze in February and March respectively, 1591), who severally but in the same words confessed the truth of what their accomplice Petter had said about the back-to-back dancing† and

\* "Name of Jesus." Cf. Anthony Horneck's account of the Swedish witches in the years 1669 and 1670, printed, 1681, as an appendix to the "*Sadducismus Triumphatus*." Concerning the transvection of witches he writes: "A little girl of Elfdale confessed, that naming the Name of Jesus as she was carried away, she fell suddenly upon the Ground, and got a great hole in her Side, which the Devil presently healed up again, and away he carried her; and to this day the girl confessed she had exceeding great pain in her side."

† "Back-to-back dancing." Boguet, "*An Examen of Witches*," chap. xxi, says in his description of the Sabbat: "Following this, they dance; and this they do in a ring back to back . . . now they dance in this manner back to back so that they may not be recognized." There are very many references to this favourite piece of choreography. De Lancre, "*Tableau de l'Inconstance*," III, Discours iii, in describing the witches' dances, says: "La troisième est aussi le dos tourné, mais se tenant tous en long, et sans se déprendre des mains, ils s'approchent de si près qu'ils se touchent, et se rencontrent dos à dos, un homme avec une femme: et à certaine cadance ils se choquent et frappent impudiquement cul contre cul." Hutchinson, "*A Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft*," second edition, 1720 (p. 43), gives a confession of Jeanne Bosdeau (1594): "The



the mingling of the cloven-hoofed ones in the dance. Their testimony was confirmed by that of a herdsman named Johann Michel, who, in further proof of the truth of his words, added that he had played the part of piper to that dance, putting his shepherd's crook to his mouth and moving his fingers upon it as if it had really been a pipe; and that when Nicolette (as has been told) in fear called upon Jesus and moreover signed herself with the Cross, he had fallen headlong from the tall oak in which he was sitting; after which he had been caught up in a whirlwind and carried to a meadow, called *Weiller*, where he had a little before left his flocks grazing. But the final and incontrovertible proof of the truth of this occurrence was the fact that the place where this dancing had been enacted was found, on the day after the matter was reported by Nicolette, trodden into a ring such as is found in a circus where horses run round in a circle; and among the other tracks were the recent marks of the hoofs of goats and oxen. And these marks remained visible until the field was ploughed up in the following winter. Further evidence was given by Nickel Klein, Didier Widder, Gaspar Schneider, and as many as were afterwards called upon by the Judge to speak upon the matter.

Here is an actual fact, not a visionary dream; an occurrence witnessed by the eyes, not merely understood by hearsay; confirmed by the consistent evidence of independent witnesses, not based upon the deliberate and fictitious report of a single person. If this is not proof enough to convince anyone, I have no more to say but that he must abide by his contrary opinion: only I would have him know that I have not imagined or invented any part of the story; but have, on the

*black Goat carried a lighted Candle in his Fundament, and all the Witches had Candles which they lighted at his, and danced in a Circle Back to Back."*

contrary, omitted to mention several instances in proof of this argument which came to my knowledge during the capital trials of witches, and have since been forgotten by me.

On the other hand, I am quite willing to agree with those who think that such Sabbat meetings at times exist only in dreams. It was very clearly stated not long since in her evidence by Catharine Prevotte (at Freissen, September 1589) that sometimes witches are fully awake and actually present at these assemblies; but that often they are merely visited in their sleep by an empty and vain imagination. For the Demons are equally ready either to transport them whither they wish when they are awake, or to impress the image of such a happening upon their minds while they are sleeping and (as Galen says, *Definit. Med.*) influenced by a brief mania. But I cannot agree with those who class ecstasies, mental emotions and abstractions from the body as pertaining to this matter; for I do not think that such a view can rightly be defended, especially when it is claimed that they are caused by the agency of Demons. S. Paul, speaking of a man caught up to the third heaven, freely admits (*II. Corinthians* xii, 3) that he could not tell whether it was in the body or out of the body; for God alone knoweth. And we read that S. Peter, together with the two other disciples, was so dazed by the glory of the transfigured Lord, and so rapt in ecstasy, that he did not know what he said or where he was. And, since we are pleased to commend the opinion of the Pagans in this matter, Pliny\* (*VII, 52*) quotes the

\* "Pliny." "*Reperimus inter exempla, Hermotim Clazomenii animam relicto corpore errare solitam, uagamque e longinquo multa annuntiare, quae nisi a praesente nosci non possent, corpore interim semianimi: donec cremato eo inimici (qui Cantharidae uocabantur) remeanti animae uelut uaginam ademerint. Aristaeae etiam uisam euolantem ex ore in Proconneso, corui effigie, magna quae sequitur fabulositate.*" *Proconnesus* is an island of the



ancient story that the spirit of Hermodimus of Clazomenae left his body and returned from long journeys to tell of many events which could only have been known by one who had been present at them; and he adds that the spirit of Aristaeus was seen rising from his mouth in Proconnesus in the shape of a raven; but he concludes that these were mere fables.

The question of the soul's wandering from the body, and its subsequent return to it as if to its home, is one of great difficulty and quite beyond the understanding of any man. It is our pious and Christian belief that the union of soul and body can only be dissolved by death, and that after its dissolution they will not be reunited until the day of the Last Judgement. Now if witches, after being aroused from the profoundest sleep, tell of things they have seen in places so far distant as compared with the short period of their sleep, the only conclusion is that there has been some unsubstantial journey like that of the soul: yet it does not necessarily follow that the witch's soul has left her body and been on that journey; for no man can endure such an experience and remain none the worse for it. The phenomenon has something in common with that kind of sleep in which it appears as if the soul has fled, although in truth it is but deeply hidden, such as we see in the case of sufferers from apoplexy, epilepsy, or suffocation of the womb. For while it is lying thus latent, the Demons, whose speed is beyond comparison (for, as Iamblicus says, *De Mysteriis Aegyptiorum, cap. de intellectu et anima*, it is a natural property of the incorporeal to fly at once to any desired place in

spite of all obstacles), imbue and fill the soul with a vision of all those things the images of which they have with incredible speed brought from far-distant lands. Similarly, it is a not altogether absurd opinion of those opticians mentioned by Aristotle (*De sensibus et iis quae sensu percip.*), that it is not by the penetration of rays but by the reception of images, as in the case of a mirror, that an object is perceived by the eyes and afterwards communicated to the brain. For it is certain that Demons often insinuate themselves into men's minds and, with God's permission, impress upon them and mark them with whatever thoughts they please: in fact, this is so well known that there is no need to dwell further upon it. And Cardan (*De subtilitate, XVIII*), who inherited this kind of susceptibility to demoniac influence, does not deny that witches during their sleep imagine that they are visiting various distant lands where they see kings, theatres, dances, gardens, fountains, parks, and other sights of rare beauty, and that they even imagine they have slept and taken their pleasure with the most comely young men; but lest he should confound himself with his own argument, and in order to bring witchcraft into line with natural causes, he tries to find a rational explanation for this; namely, that witches are in the habit of eating chestnuts, beans, colewort, opium, onions and phasels:—a ridiculous argument, since witches are not the only people who eat such things, nor are they always eating them. Perhaps, then, it is not surprising that he at once rather inconsistently adds that he thinks there must be some foundation of fact in these witches' visions.

But to resume my discussion of these nocturnal assemblies, and the better to sustain the truth of them, I think it good to expound the manner and the way by which witches hasten to attend the Sabbat.

The commonest practice of all witches is to fly up through the chimney.

*Propontis (Sea of Marmora) off the north coast of Mysia. Of the epic poet Aristeas, who is said to have been a mystic writer and a magician, we only have fabulous accounts. His date is quite uncertain; some place him about the time of Homer, but we can only say that he was considerably earlier than Herodotus.*

If anyone objects that chimneys\* are too small and narrow, or raises any other difficulties, he must know that, by virtue of that Demonolatry which makes all things monstrous and portentous, they are first bidden to exceed their natural limits; and, moreover, the matter becomes more intelligible when it is remembered that the chimneys are square and wide in all peasants' cottages, and that it is from this class that the vile rabble of sorcery is mostly derived.

Alexia Violet (in the district of Thann, 1583), Jeanne le Ban (Masmunster, July 1585), Claude Fellet (Mazières, Nov. 1585), Dominique Petrone (Gironcourt, Oct. 1585), and nearly all (Masmunster, July 1585) of those convicted of this crime, have by their free and several confessions borne witness to the truth of this fact. Nicole Ganette (Mazières, Dec. 1583) added that it was her custom, when she was preparing to start on that journey, to put one foot up into a basket after she had smeared it with the same ointment which she had used upon herself. François Fellet (at Vergaville, December, 1585) said that he used to place his left foot, not in a basket but on the ends of the backward bent twigs of a besom which he first anointed. Others, again, use other methods to fly to their assemblies. Margareta Doliar said that she had often been carried there riding upon a wicker net or a reed, after having pronounced certain requisite words. Alexia Bernard (in Guerningen, Jan. 1590) said that she rode upon a pig; and Hennezel Erik (at Vergaville, July 1586) that his father went upon a huge mighty bull, and his mother on a forked stick such as is used in stables; but when these two went

together they always flew upon a reed. Jeanne Gransaint (at Condé-sur-l'Escaut, July 1582) of Montigny said that whenever she wished to make this journey there immediately appeared before her door a terrible black dog, upon which she boldly mounted as upon a well-tamed horse; and in payment for her passage, when she dismounted she was in her turn mounted and defiled by the dog; but first (as it seemed to her) it changed itself into a not uncomely young man. Erik Charmes (Pangy-sur-Moselle, 1574) said that the Demon, like some ferryman, used to carry them one by one over any river that lay in their path; but that they had to make their way on foot both before and after they came to such a river. Barbellina Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587), François Fellet (Mazières, in the district of Pangy-sur-Moselle, Dec. 1583), and not a few others said that they had very often gone on foot to the Sabbat, especially when it was to be held somewhere near, or if they could find others to keep them company by the way; for it is said that a companion on the road is as good as a conveyance.

In passing, it will not be out of place to add here what witches commonly say about the day on which they hold these meetings. Johann Fischer, Colette his wife (Gerbeville, May 1585), Margareta Warina (Roncey, Dec. 1586), Nicole Ganette (Masmunster, July 1587), Claude Morèle (Serre, Dec. 1586) and, in a word, all who have so far been tried on the capital charge in Lorraine, and whose evidence can be relied upon, affirm that these Sabbats are only held on Wednesday or Saturday nights. They do not give any reason for this; but I suspect that it is because the Demons are occupied elsewhere on other nights. For, as S. Basil† says (*De Sancto*

\* "Chimneys." Anthony Horneck, in his account of the Swedish witches of 1669 and 1670, says: "Being asked how they could go with their Bodies through Chimneys and broken panes of Glass, they said that the Devil did first remove all that might hinder them in their flight, and so they had room enough to go."

† "Basil." The work "*De Spiritu Sancto*," which was written about 375, was evoked in part by the Macedonian denial and in part by charges that S. Basil had himself "slurred over the Spirit."

*Spiritu*), the Demons cannot be in different places at the same time. And those who have written of the activities of witches in other districts record that they hold their Sabbats on other nights than those just mentioned; and it is reasonable to suppose that the Sabbat nights in different places vary according to the distance between them and the time taken in going from place to place. "The Gods," says Apollonius, *Philostratus in eius vita*, Lib. IV, cap. 13 (and by these I take him to mean Demons), "do not remain ever in the same place; but they go now to the Ethiopians, now to Athos, and now to Olympus."

But all this is largely a matter of conjecture. It remains to be considered whether there is any fixed and settled hour for these nocturnal assemblies and synagogues. Of all the many prisoners whom I have seen, two only, Jean de Ville (Luvigny, Oct. 1590) and Agathe, the wife of François Tailleur (Pittelange, Sept. 1590), have so far given me any information in regard to this matter. They said that the two hours immediately preceding midnight were the most suitable and opportune, not only for these assemblies but for all other devilish terrors, illusive appearances and groanings; and that the hour after midnight was not unsuitable. They gave no reason for this, and I shall not waste time in unprofitable conjectures. This only shall I say: that no other hours of the night are held in such suspicion for ghostly apparitions by those who go in any fear of such things. Indeed, they are not without cause for such a belief; for experience teaches that these hours are chiefly notorious for spectres and terrible apparitions, and the ancients have amply testified to this in their writings. In Apuleius (for it is good to quote even from fables which, while not recording facts, do nevertheless represent the probable truth as nearly as possible), Aristomenes says that he and his companion Socrates were attacked by the famous witches, Meroë

and Panthia, about the third watch, which I take to mean about midnight, for it is then that the second watch ends according to the arrangement of the watches said to have been made by Palamedes, their first inventor, in the Trojan War. Pliny the Younger (*Epist.* Bk. VII, 6), telling how the philosopher Athenodorus was attacked by a spectre in the form of a wasted and squalid old man, adds that this happened in the silence of the night. And Livy writes that a voice louder than human was heard above the temple of Vesta in the silence of the night. Among later authors Alexander ab Alexandro, *Genialium Dierum*, V, 24, writes that he heard during the silent time of the night a terrifying riot of witches in certain houses at Rome. This silence of the night is interpreted by credible authorities as meaning that intempestive period which (as Censorinus, \* *De die natali*, cap. 9, says) immediately precedes midnight. Plutarch in his *Brutus* specified the depth and (which is pertinent to this question) middle of the night, speaking of that monstrous and horrible spectre which appeared to Marcus Brutus when he was about to lead his army out of Asia. Apollonius, *Apud Philostratum*, IV, 5, writing of the miracle of the shade of Achilles seen by him, says that after it had spoken with him for a while it vanished because the cocks began to crow. From this Eusebius† of Caesarea, *In confutatione contra*

\* "Censorinus." "*De Die Natali*," cap. xxiv: "Concubium," cum itum est ad cubitum. Exinde "intempesta," id est multa nox, qua nihil agi tempestivum est: tunc "ad mediam noctem," dicitur: et sic "media nox."

† "Eusebius." "*The Father of Church History*," born about 260; died before 341. The reference is to this writer's "*Contra Hieroclen*." Hierocles, who as governor in Bithynia and in Egypt was a cruel enemy of the Christians during the persecutions, had attacked them before the actual persecution with his pen. His work merely consisted of a comparison between Our Lord and Apollonius of Tyana, in which he made great use of the life by Philostratus.



*Hieroclen quarta*, concludes that the unseasonable time of night just before cockcrow is the most fitted for the summoning of and unholy speech with an evil Demon. Telephion of Miletus (Apuleius, *Golden Ass*, Bk. II) was set to guard a dead body at Larissa from the designs of witch women, and said that he saw one of these witches in the form of a weasel at such a time of the night. "It was dusk," he said, "and then the night fell and the darkness deepened, and it was time to be in bed, and then came that untimely season of the night, and I grew more and more afraid; when suddenly a weasel crept up to me and attacked me so violently that I was amazed at the boldness of so small an animal." The intempestive time of night is placed by Servius (*Aeneid*, III) at midnight, and by Macrobius (*Saturnalia*, I, 3) at just after midnight: for then is the most opportune time for the activities of the Prince of Darkness and (as Zephaniah\* says) evening wolves, when it begins to be unfit for the ordinary work of men. And, to return to what Apollonius says of the cockcrow being inimical to apparitions of the night, I remember reading not long ago, in the report of the capital trial of a witch at Dieuze, a story which has some relevance to the question into which we have digressed. This witch, whose name was Babilla Latoma (at Dieuze, Dec. 1591), was minutely questioned by the Judge about the nightly doings of witches; and among other things she answered that no more fatally obstructive a thing could happen to them than that the cock should crow† while they were making

their preparations. Similarly (July 1591), Johann Bulmer and Desirée his wife of l'Amance district said that, when it was about time to break up their assemblies, their Little Masters often used to cry out repeatedly: "Ho! Make haste and away, all; for the cocks begin to crow!" From this I conclude that they are unable to prolong their business beyond that time: and, indeed, I know from Pliny‡ (X, 21) and Aelian that the crowing of the cock is feared by lions and *scolopendras*. Furthermore, it is most ominous if they crow out of season, and especially during the night against their habit; as Raphael Maffei (Volaterranus), *Philologiae*, Lib. XXV, records to have happened on the birth-night of the eldest son of Matteo Visconti the Great, Lord of Milan, when the cocks kept up a continual and wearisome crowing. The boy was therefore named *Galeazzo*, and grew to be so famed for his eloquence and military prowess that (as Jovius§ says, *In elogio clarorum uirorum*) he far surpassed even the most famous princes of his day. Now I no more question that this was foreshown by that cockcrowing than that the cockcrow is antipathetic to lions and *scolopendras*. But I maintain that it is not so much the crowing of the cock (for many other birds have an even louder and more effective cry than cocks) that impedes the malice of witches, as the fact that such crowings are as a rule only heard at that time of the night which is unsuited to their work; and therefore it is said that the ancients regarded cocks as calendary, because they were the heralds and dividers of the hours of the night.

Eusebius shows the profane absurdity and falsity of his writings.

\* "Zephaniah." III, 3: "Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow" (A. V.).

† "The cock should crow." That the crowing of a cock dissolves enchantments is a tradition of extremest antiquity. De Lancre says: "Le coq s'oyt par fois es Sabbats sonnant

la Retraicte aux Sorciers." For further details see "The History of Witchcraft," by Montague Summers, pp. 117-18.

‡ "Pliny." The *Scolopendra* is a kind of multipede.

§ "Jovius." Paolo Giovio, the famous historian, born at Como, 19th April, 1483; died at Florence, 11th December, 1552.



## CHAPTER XV

*That all kinds of Persons attend the Nocturnal Assemblies of Demons in Large Numbers; but the Majority of these are Women, since that Sex is the more susceptible to Evil Counsels.*

JACOB MEYER, a careful compiler of Annals, writes that at Arras under Philip of Burgundy those who were convicted of witchcraft and questioned concerning their accomplices said that those who met together with them in their assemblies were drawn from every class and condition of men and women. A warlock named Trois-Eschelles, according to Jean Bodin in his *Demonomania*, told King Charles IX that the number of those whom he knew to be infected with the crime of witchcraft in France amounted to many thousands. In Lorraine, during the sixteen years in which I have judged prisoners charged with this crime, no less than eight hundred have been clearly proved guilty, and condemned to death by our Duumvirs; besides nearly as many more who have saved their lives by flight or by a stubborn endurance of the torture. For the trial of such cases is so beset with doubts and perplexities that the Judge is very often balked of his expectations, as we shall explain more fully in due course.

But all those taken up for witchcraft are unanimous in their assertion that the Sabbats are attended by great numbers. Jeanne le Bañ (Masmunster, June 1585) and Nicole Ganète (July 1585) said that the numbers were so great whenever they were present that they felt no little pity for the human race when they saw how many enemies and traitors were opposed to it, and that it was most surprising that mortals did not suffer greater damage from them. Catharina Ruffa (Villesur-Moselle, June 1587) stated that she saw no less than five hundred \*

\* "Five hundred." Michelet "*La Sorcière*" writes: "*Ces sabbats étaient d'immenses assem-*

on the night when she was first enticed into their company. Barbeline Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587) said that the women far exceeded the men in number, since it was much easier for the Demon to impose his deceits upon that sex †—an observation which Torquemada also made in his *Hexameron*. Certainly I remember to have heard of far more cases of women than men; and it is not unreasonable that this scum of humanity should be drawn chiefly from the feminine sex, and that we should hear mostly of women simpletons, wise women, sorceresses, enchantresses, and masked Lombard women. For in estimating numbers and frequency it is enough to reckon those who form the majority. Fabius (*In declamationibus*) says that women are more prone to believe in witchcraft; and Pliny (XXV, 11) that women excel in their knowledge of witchcraft.

*blées (douze mille âmes dans un petit canton basque, voy. Lancre; six mille pour une bicoque, La Mirandole voy. Spina).*"

† "That sex." In King James' "*Demonologie*," II, 5, Philomathes asks, speaking of witchcraft, "What can be the cause that there are twentie women giuen to that craft, where ther is one man?" Epistemon explains: "The reason is easie, for as that sexe is frailer then man is, so it is easier to be intrapped in these grosse snares of the Deuill, as was over well proued to be true, by the Serpents deceiuing of Eua at the beginning, which makes him the homelier with that sexe sensine."

CHAPTER XVI

*That the Food placed before Witches at their Banquets is Tasteless and Mean, and not of a Kind to satisfy Hunger. That this has led many to the not Unnatural Opinion that these Feasts are a mere Vision and Phantasm; but that such is not always the case; for at times they do truly feed upon Human Flesh, Animals which have been found Dead, and other unwonted Meats of that Kind. But that they are always lacking in Salt and in Bread. And the probable Reasons for their Abstaining from those two Articles in Particular.*

ORGIES of carnal indulgence and dances form the commonest occasions among mankind for celebrations and banquets; and the Demon is careful to provide all these in order to attract to himself more numerous and more devoted followers. For after he has so pandered to their base passions it follows that it is easier for him to plunge them into crimes at which they had shuddered before, so marvelously cunning is he to persuade any whom he has caught in the nets of his lubricity. But we shall discuss later how he occupies them with lewdness and dancing; for the present it is worth while to consider how this hospitable and entertaining host receives his guests.

In the first place, all who have been honoured at his table confess that his banquets \* are so foul either in appearance or smell that they would easily cause nausea in the hungriest and greediest stomach. That Barbeline (Serre, Aug. 1586), whom we have lately mentioned, and Sybilla Morèle said that every description of food was set out there, but so mean and poor

and ill cooked that it could scarcely be eaten. Nicolas Morèle (Serre, Jan. 1587) said that it was so evil-tasting and bitter that he was compelled to spit it out at once; and that when the wicked Demon saw this he was so angry that he could hardly keep his hands off him. And for drink he gives them in a dirty little cup wine like clots of black blood.

Salome (Vergaville, Aug. 1586), Dominique Petrone (Gironcourt, Oct. 1586), Catharina Ruffa (Ville-sur-Moselle, June 1587), Anna Morèle (Harreville, Nov. 1581), Jacobeta Weher (Dieuze, Sept. 1584), Anna Richemont (Pettelange, Sept. 1590), Stephaneta Marchant (Héming, May 1591), and nearly all of their sort, declare that there is no lack of nearly every kind of food, except salt and bread, but for which it could be said to be a regular Lord Mayor's banquet. Now it is certain that it is not without design that these two articles of food are wanting, and that there must be some reason for the detestation in which they are held by Demons; and this reason need not be far to seek when it is duly considered what inherent antipathy subsists between their natures and properties and those of the Demons. For there is in Demons a deeply implanted and seared hatred of all pure religion and divine worship, and they detest and abhor all sacred rites and ceremonies and all that is used in them; and in the Ancient Law no sacrifice was acceptable to God without salt. "And every oblation of thy meat offering" (saith the Lord) "shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering" (*Leviticus* ii, 13). And in the New Testament we find (*S. Mark* ix, 49): "Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt; for salt is good." This use of salt is exemplified in our modern ceremonies, especially in baptism, by which we are born again to salvation. Also it is customary to mingle salt with the water which is

\* "His banquets." *The Salamanca doctors say: "They make a meal from food either furnished by themselves or by the Devil. It is sometimes most delicious and delicate, and sometimes a pie baked from babies they have slain, or disinterred corpses. A suitable grace is said before such a table."*

used in exorcisms to drive away Demons.

Again, in the Old Testament (*Mala-chi i*; *Leviticus xxiv*), they offered upon the altar shewbread (which the translators of the Septuagint version explain as meaning bread placed before the Lord and in His presence). And in the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist consecrated bread becomes the true and very Body and is eaten by Christians. The Macedonians formerly used bread as a symbol whenever they entered upon any very sacred treaty, as we learn from Quintus Curtius (Bk. VIII): "For" (he says) "each of the parties to a bond used to cut bread with a sword and offer sacrifice."

There is nothing that the Demons hate so much as justice, which (as Orpheus says in his Hymns),

Deals ever fairly 'twixt opposing wills.

And conversely (as Plato says in his *Theaitetos*) none of our actions is so nearly godlike as those which are performed with justice and equity. Now there is nothing more symbolical to mankind of these qualities than salt; and this was the opinion of Pythagoras, as we learn from Alexander in his *Pythagorean Commentaries* in Laertius. For salt \* keeps and preserves whatever is placed in it, and is derived from the purest of all substances, namely, sea-water; and therefore is salt the symbol of purity. For this reason also Plato said that it was the most acceptable and most commonly used of sacrificial offerings. Horace (*Od. II*, 16) speaks of "a shining salt-cellar on a frugal table," doubtless because salt was always

\* "Salt." Bodin says that salt is an emblem of eternity (*"De La Démonomanie," III*, 5). Philip Ludwig Elich emphatically draws attention to the absence of salt from these banquets, *"Dæmonomagia," Quæstio vii*. Gentien le Clerc, who was tried at Orleans in 1615, expressly declared: "On se met à table, où il n'a iamaïs veu de sel."

regarded in a particularly religious light. In the same way Homer and the Greeks always spoke of "sacred salt." The ancients believed that their tables needed no other blessing so long as there was salt upon them, as we may learn from Arnobius,† where he says: "Bless your tables by placing a salt-cellar upon them." And bread is so necessary a thing to sustain life that the Holy Scriptures use that word to signify all kinds of food and all the daily necessities of human existence. Consequently the Demons, who desire nothing so much as that men should not live in equity with each other, strive their hardest to prevent men from obtaining the food wherewith to sustain themselves; and the truth of this is clearly enough shown by the countless injuries, plagues and calamities with which they daily afflict the affairs of men, and the incessant evils and misfortunes which they contrive against them.

But let us leave these matters, which are at best open to conjecture; and let us return to our interrupted setting out of the banquet with its strange and unaccustomed foods. Dominique Isabelle (Rogeville, 1583) added that sometimes the table was even laid with human flesh—a custom which Belleforest (*Cosmographia*, II, 6) says was very common among the Scythian sorcerers also, who were called *Bachsi*, a name probably derived from *Bacchus*,‡ whom they chiefly worshipped, and who is moreover called *Flesh-eater* by Plutarch in his *Lives* of Pelops and Themistocles.

Isabella Pardaea (Epinal, May

† "Arnobius." This writer lived about A.D. 300 in the reign of Diocletian. His celebrated work, *"Aduersus Nationes"* (ed. Aug. Reifferscheid, Vienna, 1875), is chiefly valuable for the information which it supplies concerning Greek and Roman customs and ritual.

‡ "Bacchus." "Bacchus n'était qu'un démon épouvantable et nuisant, ayant cornes en tête et javelot en main. C'était le maître guide-danse, et dieu des sorciers et sorcières."—Leloyer, *"Discours des Spectres," VII*, 3.



1588), Didier Finance (St. Dié, July 1581) and Albert Magendre (at Metz) said that the more well-to-do witches sat at the top of the tables; and Stephaneta Marchant (Héming, May 1591) added that these drank from silver, whereas the poorer ones drank from earthenware cups, but that in all other respects they were equal partners and participants in all their secret rites.

Most of the witches whom we have just mentioned asserted that these banquets in no way satisfied their hunger or thirst, but that their appetite for food and drink remained just as great after they had eaten as before; and for this reason many have been led to believe that these feasts are nothing but dreams and illusions, such as we read of in the legends of the gardens of Tantalus and the apples of the Hesperides. This view seems to be borne out by the statement of Jeanne Michaëlis (Essey, June 1590), that those who are present at such assemblies see nothing clearly or completely, but that everything seems misty, confused and vague, just as it is with those whose sight is made dizzy and dim through drunkenness or fright or sleep, or is dulled by some drug. We read also in the works of Erasmus that by means of his incantations Pasetes often caused the most sumptuous banquets suddenly to appear, and again, when he wished, to vanish in a moment from sight without any to remove them. And Numa Pompilius (who is said to have been a famous sorcerer) used often to entertain his guests by suddenly and magically causing the table to be spread with the most exquisite dainties without any human agency. Apollonius of Tyana said that he saw in India Brahmins who in his presence produced banquets with the most elaborate vessels and meats, although there was no sign of any servers to prepare them or to bring on and change the dishes (*Philostratus in eius uita*, III, 8).

But it must not be thought that the power of Demons is so limited and

circumscribed that they can do no more than create a mere illusionary appearance. For they do at times entertain their followers to a real banquet: although the dishes are made from the flesh of animals which have died, and from other things which men consider as refuse, as we have mentioned before. Many of those who have attended them have mentioned, among the victuals provided at such feasts, a cat, a black kid, a dunghill-cock, and other things not as a rule used for human food, and scarcely fit for consumption. Then there is the well-known story, told by Andrea Alciati\* and many others, of the traveller who imprudently chanced upon an assembly of witches one night and, astonished at such a rare and strange sight, besought the help of God as a Christian should; whereupon the whole feast suddenly vanished from his sight and all that was left of the whole display was one silver cup.† It is impossible to conceive that this cup had any other purpose than to hold that which was drunk; for if the drink was no more than an illusion there is no reason why the cup also should not be imaginary.

\* "Alciati." *The famous Italian juriconsult, born in 1492 and died in 1550. He professed law at Avignon, Milan, Ferrara and other celebrated universities.*

† "One silver cup." *This story is not unlike the legend of the "Luck of Eden Hall." It is related that the seneschal going to draw water from the well of S. Cuthbert saw a number of fairies at their revels. He observed standing near by a curiously painted glass cup which he seized in spite of their protests. As they vanished a fairy cried:*

*If that glass either break or fall,  
Farewell the Luck of Eden Hall.*

*The cup, yet unbroken, is preserved with the greatest care. There is also a "Luck of Workington Hall" in Cumberland, an agate cup presented by Mary Queen of Scots to Sir Henry Curwen in 1568. The "Luck of Muncaster," preserved at Muncaster Castle, Cumberland, is a very beautiful glass bowl presented by King Henry VI to Sir John Pennington in 1463.*

It may be said, then, that there is equal justice in both the views of this question; for sometimes the food so given to witches is actual food; whereas at other times the Demon, in whose choice the matter rests, merely causes them to imagine that they are feasting. We have just stated that the same alternatives are true of the witches' journeying to the Sabbat; and that sometimes they are actually present in person, whereas at other times they are not, but are resting at home in a deep sleep and only imagine that they have gone to the Sabbat, since their senses have been deceived by the Demon, who, by his charms, can cause many fancies to creep into the minds of sleepers—fancies which, even after waking, leave the mind convinced of their truth as if they had not been dreams but rather undoubted and unquestionable bodily actions. For so does that crafty one mingle truth with falsehood, that he may the more easily achieve his purpose.

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## CHAPTER XVII

*That the Dances, which were in Ancient Days performed in the Worship of Demons, are still used to-day at their Nocturnal Assemblies. That they cause far more Fatigue than the ordinary Dances of Men. Also that they are danced by Witches back to back in a Ring. That they are always a ready Source of Vice; and come little short of Madness.*

WITH wondrous cunning the Demons, when the Pagans in their impious error used to worship them, were wont to pretend that they took pleasure in those things to which they saw that mankind had a propensity; and so, as S. Basil says, under the guise of religion, kept stimulating men's inclination to sin. And that of all such human proclivities they more especially cultivated that of dancing and

capering (which always open no small window to vice) is witnessed by extant writings concerning the rites and sacrifices of the ancients. Among the Greeks, we hear of the hymns sung by Theseus (Plutarch) with solemn dancing round the altars of the Gods. And among the Latins, Numa (Plutarch) established a College of *Salii*, or Dancing Priests, which endured up to the time of Antonius Enipho, whose school Cicero is said to have frequented after his forensic labours (as Macrobius has observed in his written references to it, *Saturnalia*, III, 12), and even to the time of Antoninus Varius,\* who, as Herodian affirms, when offering a sacrifice to Heliogabalus,† had some Phoenician women run dancing around his altar and beating loudly upon cymbals and drums, while the whole Senate and Equestrian Order stood round as if in a theatre. Before that, the Israelites turned aside from the true worship to idolatry and danced in a ring around the calf which was molten from their golden trinkets (*Exodus xxxii*).

And now, after the glory of the Gospel, light has driven from men's minds the clouds of this impiety and they have ceased to take Demons for gods, yet in their secret assemblies the Demons still keep this custom of dancing, and make its observance even more flagrant than before. And just as their banquets are attended by hunger and bulimy, their copulations by pain and disgust, their largesse by poverty and want, and all their benefits by loss and damage to the recipients of them; so also those dances and caperings, which are ordinarily a pleasure, never fail to cause

\* "Varius." Antoninus Heliogabalus, "qui Varius etiam dictus est," ("Lampridius, *Vita*," I).

† "Heliogabalus." The Emperor, says Casaubon, was called by this name, "Syrus homo de Syriaci idoli nomine ita dictus." Alah Gabal, quasi dicas "Deus montis." Salmasius adds: "Sol Alagabalus nuncupatus."

weariness and fatigue and the greatest distress. Indeed Barbelina Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587), and nearly every witch who has taken part in them, said that on returning home afterwards they were so tired that they often had to lie down for two whole days for weariness. But the most pitiable and unjust condition imposed upon them is that no one may be excused from dancing; for if, on the plea of age or sickness, any of them refuses that labour, she is quickly scourged and so beaten with fists and feet as salted fish are pounded with hammers to beat out the bones.

Further, that they dance all their dances in a ring, and with their backs turned to each other (as we see in one of the paintings of the Graces), is affirmed by Achen Weher (Blainville, June 1587), Joanna Gerardina (Vergaville, June 1586), Dominique Petrone (Pangy-sur-Moselle, Nov. 1584), Hannel Armentaria (Gironcourt, Oct. 1586), Anna Ruffa (Dieuze, Sept. 1586), Zabella the wife of Joannes Deodatus (Dieuze, Oct. 1586), Odilla Gaillarda (Epinal, Oct. 1588), and countless other witches whose names I think best to omit here for the sake of brevity. Sybilla Morèle (Serre, Nov. 1586) added that they went round always to the left;\* and Pliny (XXVIII, 2) says that this was also the custom of the Druid priests, who always moved round in a ring when praying; and he says that this was always most solemnly performed to the left. And many centuries before it had been the symbol of Pythagoras to move round in a circle.

It is uncertain what is the reason or cause for this preposterous inversion, unless it be that they fear to be recog-

nized by each other if they should dance face to face. For they think they have no small cause to fear lest those who have been tried and found guilty of witchcraft should be induced by torture to betray their accomplices to the Judge; and for this reason they go masked to the Sabbat, as we have said elsewhere. Or it may simply be that they love to do everything in a ridiculous and unseemly manner. For they turn their backs towards the Demons when they go to worship them, and approach them sideways like a crab; when they hold out their hands in supplication they turn them downwards; when they converse they bend their eyes toward the ground; and in other such ways they behave in a manner opposite to that of other men.

However this may be, we know well enough from experience that this passion for dancing is nearly always the begetter of sin among men. For either it leads to luxury and vice, as Scipio Aemilianus (Macrobius, *Saturn.* III, 14), in his speech against the judiciary law of Tiberius Gracchus, complains was the case even in his day; or to fanatical frenzies and madness, the origins of which are always attributed to dancing in the writings of the ancients concerning *Maenads*, *Bacchae*, *Vitermones*, *Corybants*, *Thyades* and *Bassarides*. This also was shrewdly remarked of an immoderately and intemperately dancing woman by Alfonso,† that very wise king of Aragon and Sicily, when he said: "Wait; this woman is just about to give utterance to an oracle of *Sybilla*" (see the Life of this monarch by Beccadelli, Liber I).‡

† "Alfonso." Alfonso I, King of Naples and Sicily. He succeeded to the throne of Arragon in 1416, but spent little time in his native land. It was not until 1442 that he finally secured the throne of Naples. He died, aged seventy-four, in 1458.

‡ "Beccadelli." Antonio Beccadelli, called from his native town Il Panormita, was born at Palermo in 1349. Being considered the greatest poet and scholar of his day, in 1433

\* "To the left." Guazzo, "Compendium Maleficarum," I, 12, says, "Then follow dances, which are performed in a circle, but always round to the left; and just as our dances are for pleasure, so their dances and measures bring them labour and fatigue and the greatest evil."



## CHAPTER XVIII

*That Witches bind themselves by a Solemn Oath, which they repeat after the Demon himself, not to betray their Companions in Crime to the Judge. But they do not trust to that alone: for they take further Precautions against such a Risk by concealing their Names, and by covering their Faces with a Mask or Veil or some such thing.*

IT has long been the practice of those who are associated in the crime of witchcraft to bind themselves together by an oath under the heaviest of curses in order to give them greater confidence in each other; and so that they may be less ready, in the event of their being taken up by the law, to betray that which they have together plotted. Thus Jana à Banno (Masmunster, July 1585) and Jacobus Agathius of Ligny (April 1588) stated that it was a point of the strictest honour among witches that, if they should chance to be brought to trial for their crimes, they should not give evidence against each other however exquisitely they might be tortured; and that they should always be able thoroughly to depend upon such silence. They have made this such an essential part of their religion that they think that the consequences of violating that oath are eternal punishment. This was clearly shown in the case of Margelotte of Brinden (Epinal, May 1588), who gave evidence of the acutest distress after she had confessed her crimes; and when the Judge asked her the reason for this, she answered

*at Siena he was publicly crowned with laurel by the Emperor Sigismund. Two years later Alfonso summoned him to the court of Naples and raised him to patrician rank. As official historiographer Beccadelli committed to writing the memorable deeds and sayings of the King in his famous "De Dictis et Factis Alphonsi Regis Memorabilibus," upon which Aeneas Sylvius wrote a commentary. Beccadelli, wealthy and respected by all, died in his villa by the Bay of Naples in 1471.*

that, because she had not kept her oath to the Demon, to keep silence about herself and her accomplices, she was in mortal terror lest she must, after her death, be punished in eternal flames for her perjury. Epyrette Heselotia (in the parish of S. Epyvre extra urbem at Toul, February 1587) added that this oath is dictated in solemn words by the Demon; and that not long since she had seen Barbe Marget and Jeanne Petrone bound by it, when they were first admitted to their society.

But because this precaution often proved insufficient, and there were continually cases of witches being constrained to an unwilling confession by dint of questionings and torture, witches guarded against this risk by ensuring as far as possible that they should not be recognized by their associates, either by name or by sight. And therefore they never call the Demon or each other by their names; but when they have cause to summon each other to the feast, or to the dance, or for any other purpose, they do so in some such manner as the following: "Holla! Bains-les-Bains, Dieuze, Haraucourt, Lenuncourt!" That is to say, You from those villages and towns, come here. This fact has been divulged by Barbeline Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587) and many other witches whose names I do not now recall. Furthermore, they never assemble together without being masked, or with their faces blacked, and often (as observed by Apollonius in *Philostratus*, VIII, 7) covered with a flour sieve, or as Vergil says (*Georg.* II, 387):

Hideously mask themselves with hollow shells.

This practice is especially observed by richer ones, whose wealth makes them more conspicuous and liable to be recognized; as had often been remarked, so they said, by Quirina Xallaea (Blainville, Feb. 1587), Rosa Gerardine (Etival, Nov. 1586), Joanna

Weher (at Vergaville, September 1584), Joanna Gerardine (Pangy-sur-Moselle, Nov. 1584), Odilla Boncourt (Haraucourt, Dec. 1586), Jeanne le Ban (Masmunster, July 1585), and François from Maizières (Pangy-sur-Moselle, Dec. 1583). And lest anyone should think this a mere fabrication, when the Judge, in order to test her, said to Nicole Morèle (Serre, Jan. 1587) that this was all nonsense, she proved her words by asserting that she still had her mask hidden in a chest at her house; and when this was searched for and found, she confessed that she had had it from her step-mother, who had altered it to fit her when they first went together to those abominable assemblies.

I think, too, that it was for this reason that the Lombards called witches "Masks";\* and that it is from this that we derive our vernacular word "Masquerader," applied to those who run masked about the streets in their Carnivals of pleasure.

See how some covering or disguise is always used by those who do what they fear to have known, and those who, through conscience of sin, are always uneasy in their minds! See also what positive evidence we have

that it is no idle rumour that witches do in person attend these assemblies! But this we have already demonstrated at greater length.

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## CHAPTER XIX

*However joyless and even ridiculous the Songs and Dances at the Demons' Assemblies, nevertheless the Witches on taking their Departure have to return Thanks as if they had enjoyed the greatest of Pleasure.*

JUST as certain plants turn their faces ever toward the sun and follow him like handmaids, and just as the tide flows and ebbs in correspondence with the waxing and waning of the moon, so also do songs and music influence men's spirits by softening them or hardening them or stirring up any emotion soever in them. Gracchus, whenever he was making an oration, used to have a skilled player upon an ivory flute concealed behind him, to play such music as would either arouse his flagging energies or calm his passion. And it is said that Alexander † was so exasperated by a certain song of the minstrel Timothæus that he rushed straight from the banquet for his weapons; but he was then so soothed by a different song that he laid aside all his ferocity and returned calmed and pacified to his guests. Thucydides says (Bk. V) that the Lacedæmonians—not from any religious motive, but rather for the sake of restraining the impetuosity which always fills a soldier as he first attacks the enemy—used to employ trumpeters, who by the modulation of their music caused their armies to go into battle in a calm and orderly manner. On the contrary, those who lived in colder regions and whose spirits were not so quickly

\* "Masks." *Masca*=a witch, and is equivalent to "stria." The word is used early: e.g. "Lex Longobardorum," II, tit. xi, 3: "Nullus præsumat aliam alienam aut ancillam, quasi strigam, quæ dicitur Masca, occidere." Also "Edictum Rothari," tit. 77: "Si quis eam strigam, quod est Masca, clamauerit." Du Cagne adds: "Arnuerni etiam num 'Masques' scorta uocant"; and he notes: "Masco, Provincialibus etiamnum sagam, ueneficam sonat. Hinc Gallicum 'Masque' larua natum arbitrator, quod primum deformes essent eiusmodi laruae atque turpes quales uulgo finguntur mulierculæ illæ ueneficæ." There are in the trials many allusions to the masks which were worn at these assemblies. Thus in 1613 Barbe de Moyemont said that at the Sabbat, "elle a veu dancier les assistans en nombre de sept à huict personnes, partie desquelles elle ne cognoissoit a cause des masques hideux qu'elles auoient de noire."

† "Alexander." This incident is especially familiar from Dryden's great poem, "Alexander's Feast; or, The Power of Musique, an Ode in Honour of St. Cecilia's Day; 1697."

enkindled used to be spurred on to battle by the blare of trumpets, the shrilling of clarions, the clashing of shields, the shouts of men, and the beating of drums. Lucan (I, 431) speaks of

The *Vangiones* \* and fierce *Batavians*,  
Spurred on by strident brazen trumpets.

Without doubt (as Aristotle says) music affects the mind in various ways, and men's characters and actions are very widely swayed by its modulations. It was for this reason that Plato said (*Dial.* II) that, if children were to be brought up to nobility of character, it was necessary to keep from them the Lydian and the Phrygian measures, because the former would damp and depress their spirits and the latter would excite them to wantonness and luxury. To these two may well be added a third kind of music which goads and impels its hearers to a fanatical frenzy. Such were the Hymns said to have been sung in honour of the Gods in the ancient days of folly, by the *Corybantes*, the Priests of Cybele (whom Homer for that reason called "Dancers to music"), to the accompaniment of cymbals and other instruments of music (Verg. *Aen.* IX, 619).

The Berecynthian † drums and horns  
Of the Idaean Mother summon you.

Such also were the loud, discordant cries with which the Bacchants, the devotees of Bacchus, used to fill the air.

Where'er you turn are cries of youths  
and women,

The noise of drums hand-beaten, and  
the sound

Of hollow brazen trumpets and long  
horns. (Ovid, *Metam.* IV, 28.)

\* "*Vangiones*." A German people on the Rhine, whose ancient capital is now Worms.

† "*Berecynthian*." The epithet is derived from the mountain Berecynthus, upon the banks of the river Sangarius in Phrygia, sacred to Cybele.

Such also were the chants sung by the *Salii* of Mars *Gradius* ‡ as they danced and leaped solemnly through the city beating their shields. Such, finally, were the songs of all whose religious rites were performed by night and were, therefore, called *Nuktelia* (Verg. *Aen.* IV, 301):

Like a frenzied *Thyad*  
When cries of "Bacchus!" herald the  
sacred orgies,  
And Mount Cithaeron rings with cries  
by night.

With these may be reckoned the songs and cries uttered at night by the witches of our time in company with Demons. For if the temperate and equable sort of music can soothe not only men but even wild beasts (as Herodotus tells of the dolphin of Arion of Methymna), and cause them to lay aside their fierceness, it is equally true that harsh and discordant sounds have power to drive and goad even the most peaceable to a frenzy; and this is, as I have just said, clearly shown by the use of drums and trumpets and a general uproar and din of shouting, by which even the most lethargic are impelled to court the most open dangers of battle (Verg. *Aen.* VI, 165):

Whetting their warriors' zeal with  
shouts and trumpets.

Now there must be, at the witches' night meetings, some similar music of a kind to exclude from them all human sympathies (if, indeed, they are at all touched by such emotions), and to make them the more ready and eager to compass the downfall and destruction of the human race, which is the Demons' one purpose and intention. Therefore all is done to a marvellous medley and confusion of noises, and it is beyond the power of words to describe the uncouth, absurd and

‡ "*Gradius*." This surname is probably derived from "*gradior*," and so signifies he who steps forth, or marches out boldly.



discordant sounds that are uttered there. For one sings to a pipe, or rather picks a rod or stick from the ground and blows upon it as if it were a pipe, as Margareta Janina (at Morhanges, Sept. 1587) and many others have reported; another beats and strums with his fingers upon a horse's skull for a lyre, as was told by Margareta Doliaria (at Vergaville, Oct. 1856), Sybilla Capellaria (*ibidem*, Nov. 1586), and Sinchen May of Ostheim upon her trial at Amance, June 1586; another beats an oak tree with a cudgel or heavy club, and so produces a roaring sound like the beating of heavy drums, as Joannes Bulmer and Desideria his wife said they had seen done; and all the while the Demons sing with a raucous, trumpet-like voice, and the whole mob with roaring and harsh cries make the heavens echo, and frenziedly rage, shouting, hissing and yelling. Altogether it is like those choruses of the Roarers mentioned by Athenaeus when quoting from Clearchus, in which everyone sang as he pleased without heeding the choragus; or like the orders shouted to the rowers when a storm or tempest is threatening.

By this they are all utterly worn out: nevertheless, before they are dispersed, they are obliged to thank the Demon inordinately, as if he had entertained them with the gladdest and most graceful music. For if any of them neglects or refuses to do this, he is at once beaten so savagely and cruelly that, as those who have experienced it testify, he often has to keep to his bed for two days after it. This was affirmed by Jeanne Gransaint and many others of that sect.

But perhaps we have devoted too much time to a not very important matter: though it was not altogether to be omitted, so that men may know that it is not without purpose that the Demons affect such harsh and discordant music. Yet there is also some justification for applying here the

proverb, "As the lips are, so is the lettuce."



## CHAPTER XX

*That Demons order their Assemblies after the Manner of Men, and receive the customary Kiss of Homage from their Subjects; and that there is one of their Number who is the Chief, to whom such Honours are paid.*

THEY who swear fealty to their feudal Lord do so by falling on their knees before him, giving the required kiss and placing their joined hands between his hands, thus symbolizing a lowly and willing obedience of spirit; and the Demons most strictly exact a similar homage from their subjects whenever they hold their assemblies, although the ceremony is conducted in the strangest and most degraded manner, as is everything else that they do. For this purpose one of the Demons occupies the position of Chief of them all. Beatrix Bayona (Gerbeville, Aug. 1585), of her own accord and without being questioned, said that one of the Demons always sat on a high throne with a proud and haughty demeanour, and that each in turn approached him with awe and trembling and, in sign of submission, fell prone at his feet and reverently embraced them. Nicole Ganatia (Masmunster, July 1585), Kuno Gugno (Hochfeld, Jan. 1585), François Fellet (Pangy-sur-Moselle, Dec. 1583) and his sister Françoise (*ibidem*, Nov. 1584) and Barbeline Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587) likewise said that there was always one who was invested with the chief authority on the night of their assembly.

Let no one think that the belief in this chieftainship among Demons proceeds from a mere superstitious fable, arguing that it is absurd to look for order where all is lawless and disordered; for he must know that this belief is based upon the authority of

holy and approved writers. St. Thomas (Part I, q. 109, Arts. 1 and 2), Francis of Vittoria\* (*In repetitione Magiae*), and Antonius Torquemada (in his *Hexameron*, Dial. 3) have discoursed so lucidly upon this authority and power of Demon over Demon that there is no need for further inquiry into the question; but above all we read in the Gospels (*S. Matthew ix and xii; S. Mark iii; S. Luke xi*) that the Pharisees accused Christ of casting out devils by Beelzebub the chief of the devils. Now although this was only what the Pharisees said, yet the Commentators are of opinion that it was entirely consonant with the ancient Hebrew theology; and this view was eloquently maintained by Eusebius of Caesarea (*In confutatione Philostrati*, Lib. VI) in his dispute with Herodes, where he asserts that the Lamia which afflicted Menippus with insane love was a Demon who was fulfilling the commands of Apollyon, a greater and more powerful Demon. And if ever one of the lower order of Demons refuses to obey as soon as he is summoned by incantation, the higher Demons visit him with intolerable punishment; and of all things they are quickest to punish that sort of slackness or obstinacy. This doctrine was formally and expressly taught in his Exorcisms by Girolamo Menghi,† who had himself been taught by Lucanus. And just as Christ is the head of His Church, so also the

damned have their leader (whom Porphyrius calls Serapis, and the poets Pluto) whose commands they perform; and of the heavenly substances there is one order which rules and commands, and another which is subject and obeys. Dionysius has dealt in such detail with the Celestial Hierarchy that anything which could here be added to his exposition would be superfluous. The ancients also, in their worship of them, distinguished between the greater and the lesser Gods.

Further, in his capacity of Overlord, the Demon is not always content with the said kneeling and embracing of his hips; for (though it shames me to say it) they are forced against their wish to kiss the Demon's posteriors after he has changed himself into a hideous goat, smelling, as many affirm, far worse than do young goats at the approach of winter. After this, says Jeanne Gransaint (Condé-sur-Meuse, July 1582), to the terror of the beholders he changes to some huge monster, in size and shape not unlike a mighty wine vat, ceaselessly breathing out fire and smoke from his enormous mouth, in order to inspire fear into his subjects—a very common motive of his actions, as will more fitly be shown in another place.

The following is the most usual method of adoration adopted by witches. First they fall upon their knees; then they stretch out their hands as suppliants, but behind their backs and with the palms downward, and continue to hold them out to him until he tells them that it is enough and more than enough. So does the evil and wicked one love to have everything perverted and distorted.

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\* "Vittoria." This famous Spanish theologian was born about 1480 at Vittoria, a province of Avila in Old Castille; and died 12th August, 1546. He joined the Order of S. Dominic, of which he is one of the great intellectual glories. He held the principal chair of theology in the University of Salamanca from 1524 until 1544. He left a large number of valuable manuscripts, but his only published work is the "*Relectiones XII Theologicae in duo libros distinctae*," Antwerp 1604.

† "Menghi." A Capuchin of Valmontone. Author of "*Compendio dell' arte essorcistica*," Venice, 8vo, 1605; "*Flagellum Daemonum*," with the "*Fustis Daemonum*," Venice, 1599.

## CHAPTER XXI

*That Demons often send upon the Fruits and Crops great Numbers of Small Animals of Different Sorts, which destroy and devour them in a Moment. And how this comes about.*

THERE is war and deathless hatred between the wicked Demon and Nature; for whereas every effort of Nature is directed upon procreation and production, the Demon always strives to spoil and destroy her works. And as if he were not content with hail and snow and other destructive phenomena of the weather, in which he is popularly believed to bear a hand, he ceases not to use many other astonishing means to compass his purpose. Alexia Violaëa bore witness that, after running here and there like the Bacchantes with her companions, she used to scatter in the air a fine powder given to her by the Demon for that purpose; and that from this were generated caterpillars, bruchuses, locusts, and such pests of the crops in such numbers that the fields on all sides were at once covered with them. Evrette Hoselette (of St. Epvre, Feb. 1587), Alexée Drigie (Haraucourt, Nov. 1586), Odilla Boncourt (Haraucourt, Dec. 1585), and Rosa Gerardine (Etival, Nov. 1586) said that by a similar method they had more than once raised a great army of mice which at once burrowed into the ground and gnawed the roots of the growing crops. Jeanne Porelle (Château-Salins, April 1582) confessed that if she bore a grudge against anyone she used to send the breeze upon his cattle so that they died a slow and miserable death through its continual stinging; and that she could do this as often as she wished, simply by tearing up the first plant that came to her hand and throwing it to the ground, after muttering a certain spell. Petrone Armenarius and Joannes Malrisius (as will be shown at greater length in due course), by spreading certain herbs

about a tree, used to call up wolves which rushed upon those sheep which they were bidden to attack, and did not make an end of their destruction until they had done great slaughter.

Anton Welsch was asked to lend the garden behind his house for the witches to hold their Sabbath on the following night. At first he said that he could not, because he had to be away that night; but when they none the less kept asking and insisting upon it as if it was their right, he allowed himself to be persuaded: yet, as he had said, he went away. When he came home again in the morning and entered his garden, he found it all eaten up by caterpillars and slugs, and the whole garden full of those beasts; but he bore this in silence, since he recognized the signs of that abominable sect. For it was for that reason that he had first denied them the use of the garden, and afterwards had gone away from the house, so that he might not be a witness of his own loss, and to some extent become an unwilling accomplice.

Certain doubters and disbelievers argue that it is in the power of none but Almighty God to fashion or create anything; but they bring no new light upon the matter. For everyone knows that all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made, from the Angels down to the very worms. But what is there to prevent the Demon from gathering the widely scattered members of some species of creature and quickly massing them together in one place? Have we not clearly proved in more than one place in this treatise that he can accomplish far more difficult things than this? I suspect also that, when showers of frogs fall with the rain during a thunder-storm, it is by the Demon's art that they have first been raised into the air; for it does not seem possible that they could be generated in so short a time as the clouds remain in the sky, or that they could be drawn up by the sun like the vapours and



exhalations of the earth. The old story, related by Julius Obsequens,\* hitherto derided and ascribed to the illusory power of Demons, is probably subject to the same explanation, where we read that for three days it rained blood, earth, stones, milk, bricks and oil; for nothing in nature was ever likely to produce such a result. The ancients themselves, indeed, were learned enough in the laws of nature, and always reckoned such things as prodigies and accidents quite outside of nature.

No one need boggle at the thought of such animals defying the laws of gravity and being raised by the Demon into the sky to fall straight to the earth without being hurt, and so being gathered together in one place; for such a feat is well within the powers of men but slightly endowed with the magic arts. In our own time at Nancy a certain German Count was seen to cause all the flies in his bedroom to gather upon his dagger stuck into the wall, very much as bees hang in a bunch like a cluster of grapes from a tree when they swarm. Another man charmed all the snakes of the neighbourhood into a fire built within a magic circle; and when one larger than the rest refused to enter, the spell was again recited and it was compelled to cast itself into the fire with the others. If men, therefore, with the help of Demons, can easily perform such feats for their mere amusement, what, I ask, must we think the Demons themselves will do when they devote their whole energy and attention to the satisfaction of the lust for harm that is the very essence of their nature?

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\* "Julius Obsequens." This name is prefixed to a fragment generally entitled "De Prodigiiis," containing a record of those phenomena which the Romans designated as "Prodigia" or "Ostenta." The series extends from the consulship of Scipio and Lelius, 190 B.C., to the consulship of Fabius and Aelius, 11 B.C. Of the compiler nothing is known, but it has been suggested that he lived in the fourth century.

## CHAPTER XXII

*That Witches must always have to report some Fresh Injury worked upon a Fellow-creature since their last Meeting; and they do not escape Punishment if they come to the next Meeting guiltless of some Crime of Witchcraft.*

JUST as masters, when they examine their stewards' accounts, are strict to punish any sloth or negligence on their part, so also when the Demon inquires into the affairs and actions of his subjects at his Sabbats, he terribly vents his wrath upon those who cannot show proof that they have gone on increasing in crime and wickedness. For none of them escapes punishment if he cannot report himself guilty of some new crime since the last meeting; but, to retain his Master's favour, he must always show that he has steeped himself in some new sin. Dominica Zabella at Rogeville, 1583, said that this was a fact so well known by all who march behind that iniquitous banner that it was the chief of all their cares not to come to the Sabbat unprepared in this respect. And lest they should be able to plead ignorance as an excuse, that wicked Master holds classes in which he instructs them in every one of the crimes which he demands from them, teaching them how to bring destruction upon the fruits; how to send upon the trees and crops bruchuses, moths, caterpillars and such pestilent vermin; how to bewitch the flocks; how to charm the crops away from another man's field, or to destroy them with mildew or some other disease; how to scatter poison about; and how to do all in their power to ruin the whole mortal race. Each one of these facts has been sworn to upon oath in the confessions left by Hennel Armentaria (Dieuze, Sept. 1586), Anna Ruffa (*ibidem*, Oct. 1586), Johann Fischer, Colette his wife (Gerbeville, May 1585) Matteole Guilleræa (Pangy-sur-Moselle, Dec. 1584),

François Fellet (*ibidem*, Jan. 1584), and nearly all who have been infected with the taint of witchcraft.

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### CHAPTER XXIII

*That Demons change themselves for the time into the Shapes of Various Animals according to their Requirements. And when they wish to mix with their Subjects they nearly always assume the Shape of a Goat, especially when they publicly manifest themselves in order to be Worshipped and Revered.*

DEMONS are not merely a debased mental condition in man, as was maintained by Democritus and Averroës and the whole Peripatetic School; but are essential spirits, if I may so put it, constant in their own nature. This is clearly proved by the Gospel, where we read that they asked and were permitted to enter a herd of swine; for how could Avarice or Ambition or Perfidy enter into swine? Moreover, it has already been so conclusively shown again and again in this treatise that when Demons attack men upon the earth they are no mere empty phantoms of the fancy, but that they assume tangible bodies and appear openly and manifestly, that it would be but waste of labour for anyone to question this matter any further. But it is worth while now to consider what are the shapes and forms which they principally assume, not with reference to the quality and difference of the element in which they exist (which has been dealt with by Psellus, *Cap. Quomodo Daemones occupent hominem*), but with reference to the demands and exigencies of the particular work or task which they have in hand.

When they first approach a man to speak with him they do not wish him to be terrified by any unusual appearance, and therefore they prefer to

assume a human shape \* and manifest themselves as a man of good standing in order that their words may carry more weight and authority; and for this reason they like to wear a long black cloak, such as is only worn by honoured men of substance. It is true that many hold that their purpose in this last is to conceal the deformity of their feet, which is an ineradicable token and sign of their essential baseness; and that black is, besides, most appropriate to them, since all their contrivings against man are of a black and deadly nature.

But when, through habit and frequent experience, confidence has grown and fear has gradually vanished, then they change themselves into this

\* "A human shape." In the trials of various countries there are innumerable descriptions which might be quoted. Thus John Walsh of Dorsetshire, 1566, described the Devil as "Sometyms like a man in all proportions, saving that he had cloven feete." Margaret Johnson, one of the Lancashire coven in 1633, stated that there appeared to her "a spirit or divell in the similitude and proportion of a man, apparelled in a suite of black, tyed about w<sup>th</sup> silke pointes." A Yarmouth witch in 1644 "heard one knock at her Door, and rising to her Window, she saw, it being Moonlight, a tall black Man there." Joan Wallis of Keiston in Huntingdonshire said that "the Devill came to her in the likenesse of a man in blackish cloathing, but had cloven feet." Susanna Edwards, a Devonshire witch, 1682, said: "She did meet with a gentleman in a field called the Parsonage Close in the town of Biddiford. And saith that his apparel was all of black. . . . Being demanded what and who the gentleman she spake of was, the said examinant answered and said, That it was the Devil." At the famous North Berwick meeting in 1590 the Devil "was clad in ane blak gown with ane blak hat upon his head." At Pittenweem in 1704 a girl Isobel Adams saw the Devil as "a man in black clothes with a hat on his head, sitting at the table" in Beatty Laing's house. De Lancre says that Jeanne Hervillier in 1578 "confessa qu'à l'âge de douze ans sa mère la presenta en forme d'un grand homme noir, et vestu de noir, botté, esperonné, avec une espée au costé, et un cheual noir à la porte."

or that animal according to their present purposes. Thus, when they go with anyone on his way, they most often take the form of a dog, which may follow him most closely without raising any suspicion of evil in the onlookers. In this manner, in the year 1548, a certain Italian named Andrea used to lead about with him a blind red dog which would tell him everybody's secrets and do many other marvels. Cornelius Agrippa, also, had as his daily attendant a Cacodemon\* in the shape of a black dog with a leather collar studded with nails forming a magic inscription (Paulus Jovius, in eius elogio). In the city of Nicaea (Abdias,† *Babyl. Episcopus*; *Hist. Apost.*, Lib. III) seven Demons in his shape lay hid among the tombs

and molested the passers-by, until at the prayer of the inhabitants S. Andrew drove them into the wilderness. And not very long ago there was in the Vosges a man named Didier Finance who, whenever he sat down with others to meat, always had a dog curled round his feet; and he used secretly to reach down his hand and take from the dog poison which he could then administer to whom he pleased; and very many died by this means before any suspicion was attached to him as the author of these crimes.

But if they wish to carry anyone through the air, as often happens when they go to their Sabbats, they usually take the shape of a horse, since that animal is best fitted for such work, and so carry their riders with great velocity whither they will. Thus Olaus Magnus (*Histor. de gentibus Septent.* III, 19) records that Hadingus, the Danish King, after he had been driven from his throne by a faction, was brought back to his kingdom over an immense distance of sea by the Demon Odin in the form of a horse. Torquemada tells in the *Hexameron* that, when he first applied himself to letters, he had a companion who one night went for a walk out of Guadalupe, where he was studying Grammar, and was met by a Demon on a horse who persuaded him to mount with him and so go to Granada, whither he had intended to go on the next day. And in spite of the great distance they completed this journey in a single night, although the horse was slow and lame. Now, lest any should be unwilling to believe this man's story, I may add that he was a man of exceptional powers and worth who earned a most honourable livelihood by the practice of medicine in the Court of the Emperor Charles V. And, if I remember rightly, the Annals of the Franks speak of one in another locality who, according to some authors, was a Count of Mâcon. This man was called from a banquet which he happened to be celebrating, and

\* "Cacodemon." The story is found in Paulus Jovius, "*Elogia Doctorum Virorum*," c. 101. It is also related by Boguet, "*An Examen of Witches*," Chapter VII, but Weyer, "*De Magis Infamibus*," V, 11 and 12, relates the whole circumstance. *Opera omnia*, 1670, pp. 110-11: "*Silentio inuolui diutius . . . non patiar quod in diuersis aliquot scriptoribus legerim, diabolum forma canis ad extremum Agrippae halitum comitem ipsi fuisse et postea nescio quibus modis euanuisse. . . . Canem hunc nigrum mediocris staturae, Gallico nomine Monsieur (quod Dominum sonat) nuncupatum noui ego . . . at uere naturalis erat canis masculus . . . causam autem huic falsae opinioni dedisse opinor, partim quod canem hunc pueriliter nimis amaret (ut sunt quorundam hominum mores) oscularetur plerumque, aliquando et a latere hunc sibi admoueret in mensa.*"

† "Abdias." A collection of "Acts of the Apostles" which was formed, probably by a monk, in the Frankish Church in the sixth century. By a mistake concerning the authorship, it was under the title "*Historia Certaminis Apostolorum*" ascribed to Abdias, who is said to have been a disciple of the Apostles and first Bishop of Babylon. The nucleus of this collection was formed by the Latin "*Passiones*" of those Apostles concerning whom there were no gnostic or semi-gnostic "*legenda*," that is, SS. James Major and Minor, Philip, Bartholomew, Simon and Jude. Amongst many accretions there is a very early tradition to be found, and it is believed historical truth.



was forced to mount upon a horse which he found ready before the door, and was immediately before the eyes of many witnesses carried up so high that he disappeared from sight. Doubtless that day and hour had been appointed to him to be borne away by the Demon on some evil errand. At Joinville, moreover, and in many other places of this Province, sorcerers have borne witness that they have often seen their Demons carrying before them an image of S. Humbert \* such as is commonly seen at our cross-roads.

But when he requires to warn a witch of some matter, and there are people present who prevent him from conversing, the Demon takes the body of a little fly (and for this cause he is known as Beelzebub), and in that shape hovers about the witch's ear and whispers what he has to say. Besides many others whose names I have not now by me, this was observed by Claudine Simonette, who was convicted of witchcraft (Sept. 1588) at le Châtelet, and her son Antoine; for they said that they saw about their temples the Demon in that shape of a fly, as they were being led to prison; and that he diligently warned them not to prove themselves by their own confession guilty of the charge against them, even if the most exquisite tortures were employed to induce them to do so. For if they confessed they would still be certain of the cruellest punishment; whereas if they held their tongues they would soon escape safe and unharmed.

Often again he pleases to enter other persons' houses at night with his witches, making his way through the roof or the window bars or some other narrow entrance; and for this purpose the shape of a cat is the most convenient. The Demons assume this form so easily and naturally that they

can hardly be distinguished or recognized, unless it be that they are wilder and more savage than is usual in domestic cats; and so it is constantly affirmed by nearly all who have ever witnessed this matter.

Sometimes a man becomes jealous of one of his fellows who has been careful and diligent in caring for his flocks, and is anxious to find some means of venting his spite upon him without incurring any suspicion. Then some Demon comes to his aid in the shape of a preying wolf which rushes upon the flocks and slaughters them; after which the man accuses his fellow-servant before their master of negligence, so that at last he has to make good the loss out of his own wages. Petrone Armentarius of Dalheim and Joannes Malrisius of Sulz-Bad freely confessed that they had often done this among other manifestations of their abominable art; and they added that the following was the means they used to summon the Demon to their assistance. They tore up some grass and threw it against the trunk of a tree, saying certain words; and at once there came out a wolf which immediately fell upon the designated flocks. Indeed there could be no more fitting agent for such work than that beast which is more than all others endowed by nature for depredation.

At times also Demons appear in the form of a bear, when they wish to seem as terrible as possible to their disciples. This is especially the case when they raise up tempests and show themselves in all their monstrous horror. Barbeline Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587) stated that she had more than once witnessed such manifestations; and added that, to enhance the horror, they used to drag behind them a long train of cymbals and bells and chains, to the noise of which they added an appalling howling. But I am inclined to think that she was deluded in this matter, taking the false appearance for the truth in her great panic and confusion. Nevertheless

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\* "S. Humbert." S. Humbert I, Abbot of Maroilles, who died in 682.

Hermas,\* who (as some say) was the disciple of S. Paul, writes that he saw the Demon in such terrible shape; namely, a great beast, as it were a whale; and fiery locusts came out of his mouth.

Lastly, the form which they most gladly assume is that of a goat. This they take when they have not to undertake some service for anyone, but would exhibit themselves to their disciples to be worshipped with some ceremony, and would display themselves in some majesty. It is not easy to conjecture why they prefer to assume this shape for such a purpose, unless it be that it behoves a King to appear in public in that garb which best sets off and displays his virtues; or perhaps, as in the Pythagorean theory of *metempsychosis*, the Demon is most willing to assume that body which is most consonant with his character and nature. For goats are remarkable above all other cattle for their rank smell; and it is this quality in the Demon of his unbearably feid smell which is the surest indication of his presence. Again, the obscene lasciviousness of goats is proverbial; and it is the Demon's chief care to urge his followers to the greatest venereal excesses; and lest they should lack any opportunity, whenever he meets them he assumes that form which is the most adapted to such work, and does not cease to seduce them to filthiness, until finally he persuades them to commit even the most ungratifying and revolting obscenities. Goats also show great pugnacity towards those whom they chance to meet; and similarly the Demon always attacks any man whom he meets in any part of the world. Varro (*De re rustica*, I, 2, and II, 3) says that the saliva of goats is

poisonous to the fruits, and that their bite brings an instant plague upon the crops. It was for this reason that in the law relating to the hiring of farms it was provided that no tenant should allow the offspring of a goat to graze upon his farm. And the Astrologers only admitted this animal to the Heavens in a station outside the twelve constellations of the zodiac. Similarly, the bite of Satan is viperous, and his breath lethal and mortal; and since his fall from the Council and Assembly of Heaven he has so importunately concerned himself with the affairs of men that they who would lie in the protection of the Lord's flock must above all things take care to keep him far away and guard themselves from him by a fence. Goats have a fierce and truculent look, their brows are rugged with horns, they have a long unkempt beard, their coat is shaggy and disordered, their legs are short, and the whole formation of their body is so adapted to deformity and foulness that no more fitting shape could be chosen by him who, both within and without, is entirely composed of shame, horrors and monstrosities. It is an old saying that the lips must conform to the lettuce.

In conclusion, whatever argument may be fabricated by those who would do better to acknowledge the truth of this matter, for our part we accept the unanimous evidence of those who have testified that this assumption of the form of a goat is by far the most pleasing to the Demon, especially when he appears to his followers for the purpose of receiving some honour from them. This view is substantiated by the account written by Gaguin † (*De rebus gestis Francorum regum*, Lib. X) of a learned theologian who was an Abbot

\* "Hermas." The author of the book called "The Shepherd," a work, consisting of five visions, which in ancient times had great authority and was ranked with Holy Scripture. Origen held that the author was the Hermas mentioned by S. Paul, "Romans" xvi, 14.

† "Gaguin." Robert Gaguin, Trinitarian, 1425-1502; he was employed on various important businesses during the reigns of Louis XII and Charles VIII, and among the works he has left his historical tractates are considered particularly valuable.

at Evreux. His name was Guillaume Edeline; he fell madly in love with a certain noble matron and, seeing no hope of possessing her, thought it better to satisfy his passion with the help of the Demon at any price rather than fail in the end to gratify his lust to the full. To obtain his desire, therefore, he fulfilled the condition imposed upon him, which was that he should bow as a suppliant before the Demon in the form of a goat, and venerate him. The Spanish writer Torquemada in his *Hexameron* mentions that such *tragolatry* was common among his countrymen. And if it is wished to trace its origins further back, it will be found that it has come down to us from the most ancient times. For Hesychius and other Greek writers have recorded that there stood prominently in the temple of Apollo a huge goat or ram of bronze, to which divine honours were paid. A further proof that the Demons took an immoderate delight in he-goats as a sacrifice is provided by the story of Theseus, who was about to sacrifice a she-goat to Venus on the sea-shore, whereupon she at once changed it into a he-goat, as if that were the only victim which was pleasing to her; and therefore she was afterwards called *Epitragia*. Strabo and Pausanias have recorded that the same thing happened in the temple of Callia, which was on Monte Gargano, as well as in that temple where the oracles of Amphiaraus were delivered. And the Goat-Pans, Satyrs, Fauns, Sileni and other rustic Gods whom the blind Pagans worshipped in their ignorance always appeared with their limbs deformed like those of goats.

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## CHAPTER XXIV

*The Transvection of Men through the Air by Good Angels, of which we read in Time past, was calm and free from Labour; but that by which Witches are now transported by Demons is full of Pain and Weariness.*

THE Prophet Habakkuk was carried in a moment from Judaea to Babylon, that he might feed Daniel in the lions' den with the food he was taking to his reapers; and with like swiftness he was borne back from that place to Judaea. Also Philip the Deacon, after he had baptized the Eunuch of Candace the Queen of the Ethiopians, as he went from Jerusalem to Gaza, was suddenly found at Azotus. And there are many other instances in the Holy Scriptures of men having been caught up by the Angels of the Lord and carried with unbelievable speed to the most remote places. But such transportations were so peaceful and quiet that they seemed more like a dream than a true journey; for His benefits are always a true help, and are never a mockery. On the contrary, the favours of Satan are baleful, his solaces are irksome, his generosity is ruinous and his kindness unseasonable. If ever, therefore, for the sake of sparing their labour, he carries his disciples through the air in this manner, he leaves them far more heavily overcome with weariness than if they had completed a rough journey afoot with the greatest urgency. This was included by Catharina Ruffa (at Villesur-Moselle, June 1587) in her enumeration of the frauds and impostures of the Demon to whom she was subject; and Barbeline Rayel added (at Blainville, Jan. 1587) that she had often been so upset and fatigued after such a journey that when she returned home she had to lie down for three entire days before she was able to stand on her feet.

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## CHAPTER XXV

*However incredible it may appear, yet all Witches with one Voice declare that they are often endued by their Demons with the Power of raising Clouds; and that, being borne up in these, they drive and thrust them whither they will, and even, if nothing obstructs them, shake them down in Rain upon the Earth. Together with the Circumstances mentioned by them as Necessary and Peculiar to the Accomplishment of this Matter.*

THERE is no doubt that what follows will surpass all belief, and will appear very ridiculous to many. But in my capacity as Judge I remember having sentenced to the stake for the crime of witchcraft some two hundred persons, more or less, who have in free and open confession asserted that on certain set days it was their custom to meet together by the bank of some pool or river, preferably one well hidden from the eyes of passers-by; and that there, with a wand given them by the Demon, they used to stir the water until there arose a dense vapour and smoke, in the midst of which they were borne up on high. This vapour they form into a thick cloud in which they and the Demons are enveloped, and they guide and steer them whither they wish and at last shake them down upon the earth as hail. Salome (Vergaville, Aug. 1586) and Dominique Zabella (Rogeville, 1583) add that, before they thus stir the water, they place in it either an earthen jar in which the Demon has previously put something unknown to the onlookers, or else some stones of the same size as they wish the hailstones to be. Decker Maygeth (at Morhanges, June 1591) said that she and her associates in crime used to be given black candles by the Demon, which they carried to the pool Fonterssgrube and held with the flame downward until enough drops of wax had fallen into the water. Then they scattered some drugged powder into it; and finally beat the

water lightly with black wands given them by the Demon, at the same time chanting certain words as a sure and certain spell of execration and hate. After this the whole air grew thick, and finally there fell a heavy rain or hail upon those places which they had named, unless perchance there was anything which prevented it.

This method of raising up clouds is nothing new; for Pausanias wrote that it was used many ages ago on Mount Lycaeus in Arcadia, where (he says) "there was a spring called Agnus of so marvellous a nature that, after certain rites had been performed and the water had been lightly stirred with an oak branch, a dense vapour like a mist arose from it, which soon condensed into a cloud which united with other clouds and shed heavy showers of rain." This is, then, no new invention of our age. Neither is it a dream or fancy of old women whose minds have been confused by the Demon. But it is a thing clearly and plainly proved and tested by wideawake and sane persons who have witnessed it. This fact is supported by the following stories from *Malleus Maleficarum*, which, being confident in the integrity of its authors, I have not hesitated to set out here.

Certain judges, having a witch in custody, wished to test by means of her whether there was any truth in the assertion that witches had the power to raise up tempests. They therefore released her (since it is certain that witches lose all their magic powers while they remain in prison); and she went apart to a thickly wooded place where she dug a hole with her hands, filled it with water and kept stirring this with her finger until a thick cloud grew up and arose from it. This cloud was at once pierced through with incessant thunder and lightning, to the great terror and fear of the beholders. But she said, "Be at ease. I shall now cause this cloud to be borne away to whatever place you wish." And when they had named a certain wilderness near by, the cloud was suddenly

carried by the wind and tempest to a rocky place, where the hail fell and did no damage except within the limits which had been prescribed.

Similar to this is the following story of a Suabian peasant who was bitterly complaining of the drouth from which they were then suffering. His eight-year-old daughter chanced to hear him, and said that if he wished she would cause a plentiful rain to fall upon his field, in which they were then standing. Her father said that he very greatly wished it; whereupon she asked him to give her a little water, and he led her to a stream which flowed near by. There she stirred the water in the name of that Master (as she said) to whom her mother was subject, and so raised from it enough rain to water that field abundantly, though all the land about it remained as dry as before.

The following example is similar. Le Sieur Claude Perot, the Master of the Archives of the Companions of S. George near Nancy, a truly good man worthy of all trust in matters of even greater import, assured me as I was discussing this question among some friends that he had once had a companion who had been introduced by his sorcerer father into the company of witches, and who could in the sight of all his schoolfellows raise vapours of this sort from a basin into which he had poured a little cold water.

Jean of Charmes (Gerbeville, Oct. 1581), Jana Oberta (of St. Pierremont, November 1581) and several others of their sect have maintained that, not in a vision but with their very eyes, they have seen a great number of such persons as themselves borne up together with them in clouds so raised, and carried hither and thither more quickly than the wind or an arrow on the wing; and that the thick clouds were crossed and pierced by lightning, and they heard the roaring and pealing of thunder echo all around. Alexia Gran-Janna (Blainville, Jan. 1587) tells that while she was being borne

along in the midst of clouds and came to a place from which she could look down upon one of her fellow-townsmen, named Jean Vehon, pasturing his horses, there suddenly appeared to her a very tall black man who, as if anxious to serve her, asked her if she bore any grudge against that peasant, for he had at hand the means to avenge her. She answered that she bore the greatest ill-will to him, because he had once nearly beaten to death her only son, who was pasturing some horses on his meadows. "Very well!" said he. "Only give your consent, and I shall see to it that this injury is no longer unavenged." No sooner had he spoken than he arose up higher than the eye could see, and a thunderbolt fell with a great flame and thunder upon those horses and killed two of them before the eyes of the terror-stricken peasant, who was not more than thirty paces away. To this she testified in her sworn statement. Barbeline Rayel added that, with the help of the Demon, witches drive and roll great jars through the clouds until they reach that place which they have marked out for destruction; and then they burst into stones and flames which fall rushing down and beat flat everything that they strike.

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## CHAPTER XXVI

*The Sound of Bells, because they call Men to Holy Prayer, is odious and baleful to Demons; and it is not without Cause that Bells\* are often rung when Hailstorms and other Tempests, in which Witches' Work is suspected, are brooding and threatening.*

IT is an ancient custom among Christians to ring bells as a call to prayer and supplication when any danger or difficulty is at hand; more especially when the air is violently disturbed by clouds and storms and hail and lightning are threatened. When, therefore, the Demon hears the sound of bells he breaks into the greatest indignation, exclaiming that he is balked of his purpose by the barking of those mad bitches. This has been vouched for as proved beyond any doubt by Maria, the wife of Johann Schneider in Metzerech, and before her by many other women whose names I cannot now remember. And if ever his subjects ask him what he means by those bitches, he disdains to call them by their name, as is the wont of those who have to refer to those whom they hold in utter detestation, and answers: "Those garrulous and idiotic Beguines which, as you hear, are now so hatefully snarling at us." This was also made clear by the confession left by Catharina Pigeon (anno 1584), who was not so long ago convicted of the crime of witchcraft together with several others.

That the Demon does in very truth detest this sound, and that it is no mere simulated affectation of hatred, all the witches who have been questioned on the matter have maintained that they have proved by frequent experience. And this is sufficiently indicated by the fact that we not uncommonly hear of bell-ringers being struck by lightning, and that they are more liable to

such injury than any other men—a matter to which we refer elsewhere. Moreover, it is commonly acknowledged by witches that bells are very great protection against tempests; and this belief has so laid hold of certain persons that they think there is no more assured remedy than this, and nothing which so completely thwarts and impedes the works of the Demons. It is not inapposite to quote here the account written by Paul Grilland of an Italian witch named Lucrezia whom the Demon, after having as usual dismissed the Assembly, was carrying home through the air, when he heard the Angelus ringing out its salutation to the Virgin Mother of God. At once, as though he were deprived of all his strength, he dropped her upon the thorns and brambles below. Here she was seen and recognized by a young man who chanced to pass that way; but at first she began to devise some lying account of herself. When, however, she was entrapped by her own words (for a lie is seldom consistent), she told the young man everything as it had happened, having first bound him by an oath of silence. But he, being of an age at which it is hard to keep a secret, unguardedly told it to one of his friends; and so the report spread as if it had been broadcast, and eventually reached the Judge's ears, who held a full inquiry and severely punished the woman for the crime clearly proved against her.

Hennel of Armentières (Dicuze, Sept. 1586), Joanna Oberta (at St. Pierre-mont, Nov. 1581), and certain other witches have stated that the ringing of bells is quite without effect unless it is done early; that is, before the cloud has reached the parts about the village. At all events we must come before the presence of the Lord, whose arm is mighty to save (*Psalms* xcv), and it is most praiseworthy to have a careful and diligent promptness and readiness in this: neither is it an unsuitable or inopportune time for prayer, even when the tempest is already raging and

\* "Bells." See Guazzo, "Compendium Maleficarum," Book III, Chapter IV, 13, "Of the Sound of Bells."



spreading destruction, even as Plautus\* says:

Tearing down the tiles and gutters.

For He is just as ready to take away a present evil as to avert a threatening and impending one. Every single moment is timely and opportune for prayer to Him (*S. Luke xviii. 1*). Therefore it follows that the above warning given by witches is an invention devised by their Little Masters in order that men should be cut off from all hope of divine help during their actual miseries and calamities. Feuxen Eugel stated in addition that the sound of bells was useless and ineffective, if during the exorcisms one of the witches should be named by the concubine of the priest; but I consider this to be ridiculous and absurd.

And although some of late have denied that Demons have in the air the power of causing hail and similar calamities, and that therefore it is a vain and idle superstition to ring bells as a protection against the violence of storms; yet they agree that Demons are at times permitted by God to perform many extraordinary feats, in which they very clearly show their nature, and that they do many things which are beyond the bounds of our perceptions or understanding. This is clearly shown in the sacred history of Job, and in the Epistles of S. Paul (*Ephesians ii, 2*), where power over the air is manifestly ascribed to the Demons.

Warning of the advance and impending attack of the enemy is given by the sounding of a trumpet; and no one would condemn this practice, since the sound of such martial trumpeting has in it something which acts as a protection for even those who are asleep against the enemy's violence and attack. For it is a summons to arms, a call to the soldiers to shake off

their sloth and sleepiness and diligently dispose their outposts and all their preparations for defence. "Put on," says S. Paul, the trumpet of the Gospel, "the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (*Ephesians vi, 11*). Now the arms of a Christian are prayer and acts of thanksgiving, to which they are customarily called by the sound of bells. Verily "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him in truth; He hears the supplications of His people, and turns His ears to their prayers" (*Psalms cxlv, 18*). And, as has been well said, by devout prayer the Heavens are moved, and the gates are opened of that inaccessible place where dwells the Majesty of God.

There are some, such as Pedro Mexia\* in his *Silva de varia leccion*, II, 9, who go even further in their defence of the custom of ringing bells at the approach of a tempest, and contend that they dissipate and scatter the clouds by virtue of the sheer volume and vehemence of their sound; as if this were itself the cause, and not only a contributory help. In exactly the same way, engines of war are only effective in proportion to the skill and determination of their operators. Nevertheless, I have heard such an argument maintained by not a few, though their attempts to make it good are utterly vain. For who could strongly enough disturb a matter so far distant and endowed with so vast and dense a body? It is impossible by a mere clangour to dissolve and disperse thunder or lightnings and bolts by a mere noise and commotion. And even if bells had such power of scattering a storm, what would be the result of the

\* "Plautus." "Mostellaria," I, ii, 27-28:  
tempestas uenit,  
Confringit tegulas, imbricesque.

\* "Mexia." This famous Spanish author was born c. 1496 and died in 1552. His "*Silva de varia leccion*," published at Seville in 1543, has been compared to the "*Noctes Atticae*" of Aulus Gellius. Mexia was a great favourite with Charles V and collected material for a history of that monarch. This, unfortunately, was never written.

destruction of clouds already big with hail? For there must be fragments and morsels which must fall violently upon the places over which the clouds hang. I should consider such a belief to be as foolish as the ancient practice, mentioned by Pliny in his *Nat. Hist.* XXVIII, 2, of tongue-clucking during a time of lightning in order to appease the angry Jove. Or I might apply the proverb: "A wasp buzzing round a cricket; a puppy barking at a lion."



### CHAPTER XXVII

*That which is struck by Lightning is often seen to be Marked and Scored as it were by Claws; and this has led many to believe that the Demon plays some Part in it. For it is thought that, when he assumes a Body, he prefers to take one provided with Claws and Talons after the Manner of the Wild Beasts.*

IT usually happens that when trees or walls or roofs are blasted or struck by lightning they are marked as it were by claws. Some say that this is caused by the Demon, whose hands are supposed to be hooked like talons. But others laugh at this as an old woman's tale, and maintain that it is due solely to natural causes, from which even rarer and less intelligible effects can spring. Indeed it would appear reasonable that lightning, by its very rapidity, should score an object as if with hooked spurs; even as it is a property of flame, of which lightning is chiefly composed, to leave streaky marks upon that which it licks. Aristotle noted this effect when the temple at Ephesus was destroyed by fire; and such traces are to be found on nearly all houses which are burned down. Again, it is argued that that which is incorporeal, even if it bears a hand in the work, is incapable of any action which would leave such marks and impressions.

But all these contentions are refuted by one single argument, based upon an

axiom which has already been set forth in this work; namely, that Demons often form for themselves a body out of some solid material, and so, with the will and permission of God, mingle themselves with the lightning and do many things which are altogether beyond the natural capacity of inanimate objects: as when they keep moving up and down as if they were scrutinizing and investigating something, which is the reason for their being called squalls and gusts. Or when the lightning sometimes turns aside from an object, or strikes it without harming it; and at other times crushes and destroys. In this connexion I may also refer to the strange caprices of lightning which, although Aristotle ascribes them to natural causes, are certainly most miraculous and are undoubtedly controlled by some divine influence, as Seneca says. Examples of this are the fusing of the iron or bronze coating of a shield, while the wood itself suffers no violence; or when a casket is left whole and uninjured, while the silver within it is blasted; or when the jar is broken, but the wine remains; or when all the venom is destroyed in evil serpents and other poisonous beasts; or when a pregnant woman is left alive and unharmed, but the fetus within her is killed.

Therefore I would not entirely set aside the opinion of those who believe that in such matters there is some other influence at work besides that which can be made to conform with the normal sequence of natural causes: especially since it is found that nearly all who in our time have given themselves into the power of Demons have unanimously testified that, in their wild and disordered orgies, they are lacerated by claws. Thus, not long ago, Jeanne Schwartz related that her Little Master entered by night the stable of Nicolas Bequenot in order to kill his horse; but before doing so he scored the outer wall with his claws in such a way that you would have said a

lion had been there. And I remember when I was still a boy at my home in Charmes the lightning played over the whole of my neighbour's house, and left plentiful and deep claw marks right up to the end door by which it had come out from the house. And when the inhabitants, attracted by this strange thing, jostled each other to see it, I also went and saw it myself, not without some offence to my nostrils; for the house was still filled with a most foul smell of sulphur.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII

*They are in Error who, following the Epicureans, deny that Demons accost Men, tempt them with their Offers, strike them with Terror, set Snares for them, and are Evil, Baleful and Injurious to Men; for the Truth of this is shown in countless Stories both Sacred and Profane; and it is confirmed by the unanimous Statements of our Witches of to-day.*

**T**HEODORUS\* of Byzantium and nearly all the Epicurean School denied that any man in his senses ever truly saw a Demon; for the stories and accounts of such apparitions they ascribed to the authorship of children, silly women, and sick men filled with fears by reason of their feebleness of mind and ignorance. This belief they derive from one which is even more absurd; namely, that no such things as spirits and Demons exist in the whole realm of nature, and that therefore it is idle to be afraid of such phantasms and apparitions. Cassius, who was a member of the Epicurean sect, tried to bring the constant and sober Brutus to this way of thinking, as Plutarch recounts in his Life. But this opinion has been

contradicted by that of nearly every other school of philosophy, and its falseness has been proved by agelong experience; for history abounds in examples of apparitions which were absolutely genuine, and not the imaginary creations of fear. There was that which appeared to the same Brutus at Philippi; another at Athens to the philosopher Athenodorus; another to Curtius Rufus in Africa; and that which appeared to the whole Senate at Rome (Pliny, *Epist.* VII, 27). This last provides a specially strong argument in favour of our present contention, because it was not seen only for a moment but continuously for two years. For the biographers of Antoninus Pius, in whose reign it occurred, record that during the whole of that period the Senator Marcus Rufus, who had died, used to sit in the same seat in which he had sat in his life, where he preserved an unbroken silence. I pass over countless other examples which have occurred in more recent times.

To such instances Christian verity has added its own contribution, but with this distinction and difference; namely, that some spirits are well disposed and kindly to men and everything good is to be looked for from them, whereas others are vengeful and injurious and every plague and affliction is to be feared from them. If the good spirits find a man bowed down with dejection, they raise him up and strengthen him by their power; as it happened to Abraham's slave, Hagar, when she and her son Ishmael were desperate with thirst in the wilderness of Beersheba (*Genesis* xxi, 16); and an Angel appeared to her and, seeing that she was afraid, first comforted her and told her not to fear, and then bade her be of good hope for the fortune of her son Ishmael (x, 3 and 4). We read in the Acts of the Apostles that the same thing happened to Cornelius the Centurion; for he was at first not a little terrified at the sight of the Angel, but was at once delivered from his fear and was told that his prayers had been

\* "Theodorus." Of Byzantium, a philosopher who was a contemporary of Plato, and is spoken of in the "Phaedrus" as a tricky logician. Cicero describes him ("Brutus," xii, 48) as excelling rather in the theory than the practice of his art.



heard and that his alms were grateful and acceptable to God, and that he might confidently look forward to all happiness and prosperity. And when the women went at daybreak on the Sabbath day to the sepulchre of our Saviour, there appeared to them an Angel clothed in a garment as white as snow, who, when they were in dread of his countenance and raiment, told them to lay aside all fear; and so when they were reassured he told them everything that they must do.

But those other spirits, when they appear to a man, leave him half dead with terror; their intention doubtless being that a man in such a state of consternation will not so easily detect their frauds and impostures, and that any thought of well-doing which may yet remain with him may in this manner be shaken off and destroyed. For Plutarch quotes Thucydides as saying that by far the most prolific fruit of terror is that it breaks up and kills every good intention. And Cicero (*De oratore*, III) quotes from an old poet: "Fear doth benumb me and casts out all wisdom." Plautus\* also says: "Fear puts the whole soul into a frenzy." It was for this reason also that the ancients thought that the God Pan was the causer of sudden terrors and unexpected fears; and Pamphilus† Eusebius, writing to Bishop Theodore and relating the story of Plutarch about Thamius, includes all the Demons under the name of Pan. And therefore there are so many different Ghosts, Hobgoblins, Lamias, Empuses,‡ Spirits that change themselves,

and other such spectres which, to cause their beholders the greater terror, keep going from one shape to another, as has been elegantly expressed by Aristophanes in the *Frogs*, in the following verses:

XAN. By Zeus, I see a great beast!

DIONYS. Of what sort?

XAN. Terrible! It takes all sorts of shapes. 'Tis now

A bull, and now a mule, and now a woman

Most fair to look at!

DIONYS. Where? Let me go to her!

XAN. But now she's no more woman, but a dog!

DIONYS. It is Empusa then.

The author of the Life of S. Antony,§ Abbot of Alexandria, says: "When he was dwelling in the desert some abominable spirits tried to strike terror into him by monstrously appearing in various shapes: roaring and howling at him like wild beasts; as serpents harshly hissing at him; snarling and gnashing their teeth; glaring with terrible blazing eyes; breathing out flames from their mouths and nostrils and ears; in short, neglecting no possible form or shape which might appal him." S. Jerome in his Life of Abbot Hilarion|| gives a similar instance of their imitation and variation of voices, if not of shapes: "Often at dead of night he heard the wailing of infants, the bleating of sheep, the lowing of oxen, the weeping as it were of women, the roaring of lions, the uproar of armies, and many other different

\* "Plautus." *"Epidicus,"* IV, 1, 4:

*Pavor territat mentem animi.*

† "Pamphilus." Eusebius of Caesarea, often called Eusebius Pamphili out of his devotion to the memory of, and his connexion with, Pamphilus, the great friend of students and the founder of the magnificent library of the Church of Caesarea. Pamphilus after long persecution and torture was beheaded pro fide early in 309.

‡ "Empuses." See "The Vampire in Europe," by Montague Summers, 1929, Chapter I, pp. 2 and 3.

§ "S. Antony" was born about the middle of the third century, and S. Jerome places his death in 356-7. The Life of S. Antony is attributed to and generally accepted as the work of Athanasius.

|| "S. Hilarion" was born at Tabatha, south of Gaza, Palestine, about 291; died in the Island of Cyprus about 371. The chief source of information regarding this holy hermit is the biography written by S. Jerome. This "Vita S. Hilarionis" may be found in Migne's "Patres Latini," XXIII, 29-54.

sounds; so that he was stricken prostrate with terror at the mere sound before ever he saw anything."

For the Devil takes an incredible pleasure in using every conceivable means to torment mankind, and is on that account always seeking for occasions by which he may excite terror. "*Ate*," says Homer,\* "comes first, doing mischief to men throughout the world." And Suidas interprets *Ate* as meaning the Devil, the Adversary.

There are plentiful instances of this in ancient history which I do not intend to touch upon here, since our own times will provide more than sufficient examples. The first of these that comes to my mind concerns a certain carter of Nancy who was out wooding in the forest pass of Hennin, about two miles from the city, when he was overtaken by an unexpected storm. He hurriedly looked round for some protection, and went under the nearest tree that seemed to offer the best cover, where he stood waiting for the storm to abate. Suddenly he saw another woodman; and when he looked more closely at him (as is customary when we meet with a stranger), he noticed that his nose kept shooting out to an enormous length like a trumpet and then shot back in a moment to the natural size, that he had cloven hoofs, and that his whole body was abnormally large. At first he was nearly dead with fright, but soon (as is the custom in such straits) he made the sign of the Cross, trusting in that to protect him; and at last he found himself alone as he had been before. But he was so dazed that, whereas before he could not have lost his way blindfold in the city, now he could not tell where he was, however much he tried; but ran into the city with his tongue cleaving to his palate, his eyes starting

out, and trembling all over to such a degree that it was easy to believe in the truth of what he said had happened. The story was still further substantiated by the report given by some other woodmen of what they had seen from a distance; namely, that it had seemed to them that the air in that place had become thick and involved in dense smoke.

The following example bears out the same argument. Etienne Nicole of Grand Bouxieres sous Amance had hired out, in April 1588, some wine casks to a magistrate named Didier, and repeatedly sent his wife Jacobeta, who was a famous witch, to demand from him the agreed price. At last Jacobeta grew weary of asking and indignant at having lost so much labour, and began to brood deeply over some means of punishing Didier for his subterfuges, seeking for some opportunity to injure him secretly. Meanwhile it fell out very aptly that Didier was bidden to go and live in a lonely place by himself, because his house had been infected with the plague; and he and his household made their abode in some isolated huts. Late one night (at the instance of Jacobeta) the Demon attacked him and his only son as they dwelt there, with so horrible a clamour and roaring that it seemed as if the heavens were loosened and falling upon their roof. That this was no feigned terror maliciously invented by Didier in order to spread idle rumours was shown by what followed; for both he and his son were made so ill by it that all who saw them gave up all hope for them.

Relevant to this argument also is the story, which will be told in more detail in its own place, of the nurse to whom, as she was watching by a child's cradle, there appeared the Demon of Erik Charmes, who bore an evil will to her, and threw her into the greatest terror, smashing and hurling about the glass of the windows with an appalling noise.

\* "Homer." "Iliad," IX, 505-7:

ἡ δ' ἄτη σθεναρή τε καὶ ἀρτίπους, οὐνεκα πάσας  
πολλὸν ὑπεκπροθέει, φθύνει δέ τε πᾶσαν ἐπ'  
αἶαν  
βλάπτονσ' ἀνθρώπους·

Psellus writes that the Demons, in order to enhance the terror, often hurl stones,\* but without harming anyone with them. Sigebert tells that the inhabitants of Mainz were plagued with such a stoning in the year 853, and that they could have endured this nuisance if it had not been followed by a far graver one, namely, a fire which destroyed all those houses which the Demon had before attacked with stones.

A similar disaster befell Colombiers, a village six miles from Toul, within our own memory. At the very end of this village on the road to Salsuria a peasant had his cottage, humble enough but clean as his fortune would permit, and never known to have been haunted by any spectres. Yet did a Demon occupy it, who was at first content to throw stones at its inmates during the night without hurting them; but when they became so used to this that they took no notice of it and even laughed at it, he could not endure such contempt, and at dead of night set fire to the cottage so that it was instantly burned down almost to the ground. I chanced to be travelling that way a few days later and, hearing of this event from the villagers, resolved to go myself and see the ruin, so that I could more clearly and authoritatively report the matter to others.

In this connexion it is not inapposite to relate a story told in his vernacular tongue by the Spanish writer Torquemada (*Hexameron*, Dial. 3). There was, he says, at Salamanca a matron whose house was commonly reported to be haunted by this sort of stoning. Hearing this rumour, the mayor of the city resolved himself to prove whether there was any truth in these constant reports, or whether they were rather inventions of the servants of the house for the purpose of concealing some misdemean-

our; for among these there were two not uncomely girls, and it was suspected that the whole story had been invented by them so that their lovers might have easier access to them. Accordingly, the mayor went to the house at the hour when the stoning was said to be most frequent; and with him went no less than twenty of the townsmen, some of whom he sent with a light to see whether there was anyone at the top of the house who was thus throwing stones at the servants. They carefully searched every corner and reported that they had found nothing which could cause such haunting; yet they determined to go down to the basements, to which they came from the dining-room, and wait there a little in the hope of discovering anything that might be there. And hardly were they there before a great shower of stones began to fall upon them with a loud noise, passing by all their legs, however, without hurting them. So they again sent some to see where so heavy a shower of stones could come from; and when everywhere was found empty as before, many began to feel convinced that the whole matter was indeed due to the arts and magic of Demons; and they were further strengthened in this opinion by the fact that a continuous hail of stones fell about their heads even after they had rushed out of the house in terror. At last one of them, feeling more confident at a safe distance, picked up one of the stones and, after having carefully noted its shape and appearance, threw it back at the house, saying, "If this comes from you, O Demon, throw it back to me at once." It was immediately hurled back, though without doing any damage; whereupon they ceased to have the slightest doubt but that the matter was just as the matron had at first reported.

I remember also that, when the pestilence was raging at Toulouse about the year 1563, I was in Auch and was spending the night gaming with my

\* "Hurl stones" These would seem to be Poltergeist hauntings, for which see "The Geography of Witchcraft," by Montague Summers, 1927, pp. 184, 280, 282-6.



friend Abellus of the Cathedral of that city (being of the age and having the leisure for such pastimes), when all of us who were gaming in the room were not slightly molested by a wanton Demon of this sort. Stones were hurled hither and thither, but fell to the ground without hurting anyone, and the bolts of the door were shot; yet there was nothing in the chamber but the gaming-board, a table and chairs, none of which could have concealed any mechanism for producing such results.

In this manner, as I have said, do the good and evil angels differ in their reasons for appearing to men; for their motives are in every respect contrary, and as opposite as is kindness to hatred, comfort to terror, help to harm, or benefits to injury. From this it follows also, as I said at the beginning, that it is impossible without grave error to doubt that there are Spirits which concern themselves in the affairs of men, wishing them either good or ill, either benefiting or obstructing them, either encouraging or betraying them.



## CHAPTER XXIX

*Not only are Witches, as has already been said, carried through the Air by Demons; but being in the Air they devise and work much Harm to Men: and finally they are gently and quietly placed down upon the Ground, even as Birds alight.*

THEY who deny that witches really go to their Sabbats, holding that such journeys are merely imaginary, base their opinion chiefly on the authority of the Council of Ancyra, which pronounced that this was an entirely pagan and impious error. But in the opinion of many this Council was a merely Provincial one convened by Marcellus the Bishop of Ancyra, against whom Asterius Apollinarius and Hilary wrote, as being even suspect of the Sabellian heresy. And

although this view is later found confirmed in the second canon of the sixth Trullan\* Synod, yet it has been contradicted by the verdicts of many Fathers of later times: among whom were S. Ambrose, S. Augustine (*Civ. Dei*, X and XXI), S. Thomas (2nd of 2nd, q. 95, art. 5), S. Bonaventura (in III. *sent. dist.* 19, 1. 3), Pope Innocent VIII (in *bulia præfixa Malleo Malef.*), and Cardinal Caietanust (2nd of 2nd, q. 95 *super art.*, 3. *S. Thomae*); as well as Lawyers of such high standing as Alfonso† à Castro (*De justa hæret. punit.* I, 14), Silvester§ Prieras (*De Strigibus*), Paulus Grillandus|| (*De sortil.*

\* "Trullan." The Third Council of Constantinople, being the Sixth General Council, summoned in 678, but opened 7 November, 680, is often known as the Trullan Council, or Council "in Trullo," since the fathers met in a large domed hall ("trullus") of the Imperial Palace. It was presided over by three papal legates who brought to the Council a long dogmatic letter of Pope Agatho.

† "Caietanus." Tomaso de Vio Gaetani, Dominican Cardinal, philosopher, theologian, and exegete; born 20th February, 1469, at Gaeta; and died 9th August, 1534, at Rome. His commentaries on the "Summa Theologica," the first in that extensive field, begun in 1507 and finished 1522, are his greatest work and they were immediately recognized to be a classic in scholastic literature.

‡ "Alfonso." à Castro. A Franciscan theologian, friend to Charles V and Philip II; was born in 1495 at Zamora, Leon, Spain; and died at Brussels, 11th February, 1558. The "*De Iusta Hæreticorum Punitio*," Salamanca, 1547, is reckoned among his most important works.

§ "Silvester." Francesco Silvester, a famous Dominican theologian, was born at Ferrara about 1474, and died at Rennes, 19th September, 1526. He filled the highest offices in his order, being named Vicar-General by Clement VII, and on 3rd June, 1525, in the general chapter held at Rome he was appointed Master-General. He wrote many theological works of great value, and he is especially praised for the clearness and elegance of his style.

|| "Grilland." Paulus de Grillandis Castilioneus, "diocesis aretinae (Arezzo) criminalium causarum auditor reu. p. d. Andreae de

II, q. 7), Martinus Navarrus¶ (in *manuali*, c. 11, nu. 38), Sprenger (in *Malleo Maleficarum*), and many others who have conducted many and various inquiries upon such witches. Undoubtedly it has always seemed the sounder and safer view to believe in the literal truth of this matter; for it is founded upon an argument as to which all Theologians are in perfect agreement; namely, that, after their fall and apostasy, the Demons retained their natural qualities intact, which are immortality, power, motion, speed, knowledge, and other such gifts which were theirs from their origin. Moreover, the good spirits are able in a moment of time not only themselves to traverse immense distances through the air, but without difficulty to carry men with them; as is sufficiently proved by the instances which we have recently quoted of the Prophet Habacuc and Philip the Deacon. It should not, then, seem wonderful that the evil spirits also should have this power.

There is no lack of examples to prove the truth of this. In the Gospels (S. Mark v; S. Luke viii) we read of a man possessed of an unclean spirit which often bore him away into the wilderness, having first broken his chains. And we know that Jesus Himself was taken up by the Devil and set down

*Iacobatis, sanctissimi domini nostri papae almaeque urbis vicarii generalis.*" This author wrote an important "*Tractatus de Hereticis et sortilegiis, omnifariam coitu eorumque poenis*" which may be dated about 1525. The edition published at Frankfort in 1592 has a commentary by the jurist Ponzinibio.

¶ "Navarrus." Martin Aspilcueta, generally known as Doctor Navarrus, the famous Spanish canonist and moral theologian, was born in the kingdom of Navarre, 13th December, 1491; and died at Rome, 1st June, 1587. His "*Manuale siue Enchiridion Confessariorum et Poenitentium*," Rome, 1568, was long held as a classic in the schools and in actual practice. His numerous works have been collected no less than four times: Rome, 1590, three vols., folio; Lyons, 1590; Venice, 1602; and Cologne, 1615, 2 vols., folio.

first upon a pinnacle of the temple, and then upon a high mountain. There may be some who think that these were miracles proper to that age, which God permitted as being then of use in the furtherance of the Gospel teaching, but that such miracles are no longer needed, and that there is no authority for believing in them. To such I answer that recent history is full of examples of such occurrences, as we shall fully show later in this work, and that fresh instances keep coming to light every day. I shall here relate a few of these, which are clearly testified in the records of the Provinces in which they occurred.

At Gironcourt in the Vosges Province there is a strongly enough built castle from the summit of which some tiles were thrown down by lightning. Not long afterwards (Oct. 1586) Sebastian Picarda was charged with witchcraft in that village and confessed to the Judge that this had been the work of a Demon and herself. "For," she said, "we were together in a cloud rushing upon the castle to destroy it entirely, but this was not in our power: yet we were able to inflict a little damage upon it, so that we should not altogether fail in our attempt."

The following is similar. A certain man named Kuno, who was a magistrate at Ronchamp in the parish of S. Clement, where he lived, was with his servants making hay in the country when he saw a heavy storm brewing in the sky, and made ready to run home. But while he was about this, there was a sudden flash of lightning, and he saw six oak trees near him torn up by the roots, while a seventh which still stood was all rent and torn as if by claws. He then made all the more haste, and in his hurry dropped his hat and the implements which he was carrying; and there came another crack of thunder, and he saw in the top of an oak near by a woman resting, who (as is probable) had been set down there from a cloud. Looking more closely at her, he recognized her as an old woman

of the neighbourhood, and at once began to upbraid her in the following words: "Are you that vile Margareta Warina? I see that it was not without reason that everyone has suspected you of being a witch. How came you here in that state?" She answered: "Pardon me, I beg you, and keep what you have seen secret. If you will do this for me, I will undertake that neither you nor yours shall ever suffer the least harm from me." If anyone feels a doubt about this, let him know that it was proved, not only by the evidence given upon the most solemn oath by Kuno before the Judge, but also by Warina's own confession, repeatedly made without any torture and confirmed in the hearing of many at the last moment of her life.

Here it is apposite also to relate what I have learned, on the authority of those who conducted them, from other capital trials. A storm burst with much thunder and lightning upon the slopes of the hill Altenberg, which is near the region in Hohlech in the Vosges district; whereupon the shepherds and herdsmen who were keeping their flocks there (since it was exposed to the storm) sought shelter in the neighbouring woods. Suddenly they saw two peasants clinging to and entangled in the topmost branches of the trees, and so terrified that it was obvious that they had not come there of their own will, but had been driven there by some unexpected chance or impulse. The dirty and bedraggled appearance of their clothes also, which seemed as if they had been dragged through all sorts of mud and thorns, gave further point to the suspicion that they had been dragged here and there by their Little Master according to his custom. They were the more confirmed in this opinion when, after they had remained there for some time to make sure of what they had seen, suddenly without their noting it the two men disappeared. Finally, all doubt was removed not long afterwards when the two men were imprisoned and

freely confessed everything just as the shepherds had reported it.

There is a house lying on the left as you go from Belmont to Waldersbach, on to the top of the roof of which the same two men once fell from a storm cloud; and one of them, whose name was Kärner, was much troubled as to how they could come safely to the ground from such a height. For he was as yet raw and inexperienced in these matters, and this was the first time he had set out upon a cloud to work such madness. The other, Amant, who had been as a child initiated by his parents into the service of the Demon and had early become accustomed to such matters, laughed at him and said: "Be of good heart, you fool; for the Master by whose virtue we are able to accomplish far more difficult things will make short work of this little problem." And it was no sooner said than done; for they were suddenly caught up in a whirlwind and set down safe upon the ground, while the whole house shook and seemed as though it would be torn from its foundations. The men themselves separately swore to this in the very same words; and the occupants of the house confirmed all their story, as to the day and the tumult and the shaking. And finally, they who had in their lives been associates in crime were by the Judge's sentence consumed together in the same fire.

All these examples together provide a cumulative evidence of the truth. I could if I wished relate many more instances which have come to my knowledge in my trials of witches. But just as a lawyer hesitates to speak without a good legal backing, so I refrain from adducing cases in which I have no documentary evidence wherewith to convince my opponents. For, as I have already said, before I resolved to write this work I neglected much evidence which I am now sorry that I did not place on record; since I have often felt the need of such evidence, and it has been altogether lost beyond recall.



## THE SECOND BOOK



### CHAPTER I

*That it is not in the Demons' Power to recall the Souls of the Dead to their Bodies. But since they are the greatest Mimickers of the Works of God, they often appear to do this when they enter into the Bodies of the Dead and from within give them Motion like that of the Living, just as we see in the case of Automatons. Also the History of the Blasphemy, Parricide, and Monstrous Loves of Petrone of Dalheim.*

**H**ERODOTUS in *Terpsichore* makes mention of necromancy and vaticination by means of Shades summoned from the Lower World. Homer in the *Odyssey* and Vergil in his *Aeneid* speak of Mercury (who is believed to have been a powerful enchanter) as the evocator of souls from Orcus. Moreover, history, both sacred and profane, is full of examples of those who have compelled the shades of the departed to return to their bodies and answer in human tongue the questions put to them. When Saul was in doubt whether to fight a decisive battle against the Philistines or whether to postpone it to some other time, he went to inquire of the Lord what would befall if he did battle; and when the Lord answered him not, he went to the town of Endor hard by to an old woman who, he had heard, was skilled in raising the souls of the dead; and after having sworn an oath that he would never reveal it to any man, asked her to summon the soul of Samuel from Hell. And hardly had she begun her incantations, when, behold, there suddenly appeared the figure of a venerable old man in priestly raiment, who said that he was Samuel, and prophesied to Saul that he and his sons would be defeated and slain in battle on the

next day, and that with his life the kingdom also would pass from his house.

Of very much the same nature is the instance, told by Lucan (*Pharsalia*, VII), of a newly-slain soldier who was recalled to life by a woman of Thessaly and foretold to Sextus Pompey the result of the Pharsalian War. And lest this should be thought a mere poetic invention, the same story is quoted from Varro by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* VII, 52), in almost the same words, the only difference being that he said nothing of the woman's incantation: "In the Sicilian War Gabienus, the bravest of Caesar's sea-captains, was captured by Sextus Pompey and, by his order, had his throat cut so that his head was almost severed from the body, and so lay for a whole day. But towards evening he was heard by the many who were thronging round him to groan and implore them that Pompey should come to him, or else send one of his friends; for he said that he had been sent back from Hell and had something to tell him. Pompey sent several of his friends, to whom Gabienus said that the Gods of the Lower Regions were favourable to Pompey's cause and had listened to his prayers; that the future would fall out according to his wishes; that he had been bidden to announce this to them, and that as a sign of the truth of his words he would at once expire when he had performed that duty. And so it happened."

Very like this is the story of the Egyptian prophet Zatchlas, told by Apuleius (*De Asino Aureo*, II) as follows: "This man for a great sum of money undertook to raise from Hell the spirit of a dead young man and bring him back to life in his body, as if by right of postliminy. Accordingly, he propitiated the stars of heaven, the infernal deities, the natural elements, the nocturnal silences, the Coptic shrines, the increases of the Nile, the Memphitic mysteries, and the sacred Pharian rattles; after which he laid a certain herb upon the corpse's mouth, and

another upon its breast. His breast then began to heave, and his pulses to beat, and the corpse was filled with breath and rose up and started to speak. And when he was bidden to divulge the mystery of his death, he said that he had been killed with a poisoned cup by his newly-wedded bride, in order that he might leave the bed free for her adulterer. After he had so spoken, his body was at last restored to the earth."

There is no lack of modern examples to match with those of ancient times. In the year 1563 there was at Paris a woman given to such practices, whose name I have thought fit to suppress on account of the nobility and importance of her family. I went to visit her, as was my custom since she was a fellow-countrywoman of mine, and found her with two officers of the Royal Household discussing how they could most easily obtain possession of the treasure which, they said, the King had granted them an opportunity of inspecting (for the Leonine Law forbids a man to try to win a treasure by means of impious sacrifices or magic arts detested by the law; and there are many other salutary laws to restrain the covetous ambitions of courtiers). I heard one of these men telling in all seriousness how, not many days before, he had conjured a corpse on its gibbet to speak with him on this matter, but that he had been unable to elicit anything definite from it, since all its answers were ambiguous and perplexing.

From time immemorial it has been believed that the souls of the dead can be raised from the tomb and, by means of incantations, called back to their bodies. But for my part I hold that the mortal frame is so dissolved by death that, except by some special favour of Almighty God, it cannot again be knit and joined together until

That far day when, at the end of time,  
The fire of God shall reunite all things.

For, as Lucretius says (III, 942),

None is there that awakes  
When once the cold surcease of life has touched him.

The story of Samuel\* has been used to substantiate the contrary opinion; but there are many authorities who have not so interpreted it. For S. Augustine, agreeing with Tertullian (*De anima*) and not a few other orthodox writers, says that this story is not to be taken as a literal fact, but rather as a vision seen by Saul, who, having sinned, was unable to form a right judgement of it. And that it was an illusion of the Devil is shown beyond doubt by the following argument: if Samuel had truly appeared, he, being a just man who had in his life declared that God alone was to be worshipped, would not have permitted himself to be worshipped by the King. Again, a man of God who was at rest in Abraham's bosom would not have said to a sinful man worthy of hell-fire: "To-morrow thou shalt be with me." And Zonaras (*Annal.* tomo 1),† a most careful inquirer into Christian truth, says in exposition of this story that the spirit of Samuel was not in truth, but only in appearance, called up; and he terms it a spectre, not the spirit of Samuel. For of a certainty (as it is fully set out in the last chapter of the Synod of Ancyra) those apparitions which are raised by incantations cannot be said to exist really in the body, but only in

\* "The Story of Samuel." For a full discussion of this see "The History of Witchcraft," by Montague Summers, 1926, Chapter V, pp. 176-81. Remy is incorrect in the opinion he ascribes to S. Augustine, who held that the vision evoked by the woman was really and truly the prophet Samuel.

† "Zonaras." Joannes Zonaras, a celebrated Byzantine historian and theologian of the twelfth century. The reference here is to his "Annales" in eighteen books, a chronicle from the creation of the world to the death of Alexis in 1118. It may be remarked that the earlier part is chiefly derived from Josephus.

the spirit and in some figure which deceives our sight. Or if there is a solid human body, it is a dead corpse which (as Vitruvius says) moves organically through the agency of a Demon which has entered it; just as we see in the case of automata and daedalian mechanisms, which, as Cassiodorus\* says (*In lib. Variorum*), give forth a metallic bellowing, or when brazen serpents hiss, and imitation birds incapable of a voice of their own yet sing as sweetly as a nightingale. The Pythian Tripods move and walk of their own accord, some pouring out wine for the guests and others water, as it is reported to have been seen by Apollonius when he was with Hiarchas and other Gymnosophists. I think that no man in his senses will ever deny that even more wonderful things than this can be performed by the subtlety and agility of Demons, seeing that they have no small affinity with that vital spirit which is the life of mankind.

There is a further consideration which does much to explain this whole matter. For since they are foul and unclean spirits it should not be surprising that, as a pig returns to its wallowing place, they should find their favourite habitation and lodging in stinking corpses. And therefore it is that ghosts, that is Demons, are chiefly to be met with in churchyards and in places of punishment and execution for criminals. For it is foolish and impiously pagan to believe that souls haunt and hover about such places through longing for their discarded bodies, since there are fixed and constituted places for the departed to which they go. The passage in the Epistle of S. Jude (verse 9) seems to

bear a relation to this matter; where he writes that there was a struggle between the Devil (whom Franciscus Venetus, *Problem. sacr. scrip.*, tom. I, sect. 8, probl. 433, calls Azazel†) and the Archangel Michael for the body of Moses; for it is probable that the Devil meant to occupy that body so that he might the more easily beguile the Israelites and lay open the window for idolatrous practices, as the Rabbinical Books record that he did more than once afterwards in the appearance of many other dead men; and as the best protection against such happenings they prescribed that seven circles should be traced round the tomb where a corpse is buried.

To all this must be added the fact that Satan is the greatest apier of God's works, and it is his chief care to appear to his subjects as nearly as possible God's equal in power and might. S. Peter raised Tabitha from the dead at the prayer of the disciples to whom she had been devout in almsgiving; and many ages before him, Elijah restored to life the dead son of the widow woman of Zarephath, who had supplied him with food. Therefore, to prove himself in no way inferior, Simon tried by his magic spells to bring to life the dead body of a boy who, Hege-sippus says (III, 2), was closely related to Nero, and did indeed cause it so to move that it appeared to have come back to life; but it soon fell back to the ground dead as before. For, according to Clement in his *Itinerarium*, when he ceased from the spells by which he had bound the corpse, the result gave a clear and unmistakable

\* "Cassiodorus." At the age of seventy this great statesman retired to the monastery of Viviers and there passed the last thirty years of his life. The leisure hours which he spared from study and writing he employed in the construction of philosophical toys such as sundials and water-clocks. The reference here is to his "Uariarum (Epistolarum)," Libri XII.

† "Azazel." The word translated "emissary goat" (Douay) and "scapegoat" (A.V.) in "Leviticus," xvi, is Azazel, which appears to be the name of an evil angel or demon. Professor A. R. S. Kennedy in *Commentary on Leviticus*, xvi, 8, in the "Century Bible" writes: "In later Jewish literature (Book of Enoch) Azazel appears as the prince of the fallen angels, the offspring of the unions described in 'Genesis' vi, 1 ff."



proof of the difference between the true acts of God and the lying imitations wrought by rash daring of Demons. Phlegon,\* a freedman of the Emperor Hadrian, tells of a similar thing happening at Tralles in Asia to a girl who had been six months dead. Damis and Philostratus, in their *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, record that he often restored the dead to life. And not long since there was a German story circulated in writing of a man named Aulicus who, being told that his wife was dead and that her body had been laid in a tomb, hastened home to look after his affairs and, brooding much upon her late into the night as is usual in the case of such a loss, saw her disrobing herself in her customary manner and preparing to go to bed as usual. In this purpose, since he had received certain news of her death, he opposed her for a little; but being convinced by her speaking in her own voice and by her clear exhibition of her body, he permitted her to lie down with him; and for a short time they lived their usual daily life together, until by the potent words of an exorcist the Demon, who had raised up that corpse and occupied it in order to deceive and, if possible, destroy the husband, was compelled to depart from it. It is certain that no exorcism could have had this result if the woman's own soul had truly been in her body; but just as the law provides every opportunity for dispossessing a man of what he has unjustly usurped, so no one need marvel that the Demon is thus cast out from his insidious occupation of a dead body, if he realizes what force there is in adjurations and exorcisms to effect this.

Of such sort were the Shades of Thyestes, Polydorus, Tantalus, Agamemnon, Achilles and other heroes, which the poets tell us used to walk about their tombs; for (to quote

Eusebius, *In refutatione sexta contra Hieroclem*) these were the spectres and apparitions of unclean spirits mocking foolish men in the form of those Ghosts, while they demanded for themselves sacrifices in honour of the dead, expiatory rites from their supposed children, and other such religious ceremonies. "For why" (asks Eusebius) "should the Shades wish to leave the Islands of the Blessed in order to play such foolish tricks?" S. Justin Martyr (*Apologia secunda ad fratres*) proves the same insane error against those who profess to be able to raise souls from Hell by their incantations, namely, that they do not see that it is not the shades of the dead but Demons that they evoke. For it is all a vain adumbration and imitation of the truth, rather than any solid and sure expression of it; and this is especially so when a man who has once died and, as they say, become the property of the Nether Gods, returns as it were by right of postliminy to the light so that we think we see him with our eyes performing those bodily actions of which he was capable when his life was whole and unimpaired.

A rare and singular proof of this argument is provided by the story of Petrone Armentarius, at Dalheim, 1581, which I have fully related in my Summary of this work. His Succuba *Abraham* forced him to fulfil his solemnly given promise to commit foul murder upon his only son; and when he could not endure his loss and was driven nearly mad by the thought of the infanticide which he had perpetrated, she promised that, if he implored her with supplication and adoration, she would bring the boy back to life; and accordingly for a whole year she caused him by her magic to appear as if he were living and exercising his natural functions. That this was no more than a deception and illusion was clearly and abundantly shown when, without any previous illness, the boy again died, and immediately began to stink so abomin-

\* "Phlegon." For a full account of this see "*The Vampire in Europe*," by Montague Summers, 1929, Chapter I, pp. 34-38.

ably that it was impossible to look at him except from a distance, and that with the nostrils pressed close together.

But since this story opens up certain questions worthy of consideration as showing the boundless and insatiable ardour of the crafty Devil in imitating and copying the functions of humanity, and because these questions cannot conveniently be dealt with without some digression, it will not be foreign to our present purpose to consider certain other matters which will help to establish the truth of such a story, to indicate its causes, lay bare its pitfalls, show the damning nature of its results, and give to the improvident and careless an inducement to a more attentive avoidance of such snares. In the first place, then, no one who has read what I have already written can doubt the existence of *Ephialtes* or Incubus Demons who, in the manner of men, ravish and debauch the women who have given themselves over to them; for I cannot readily agree with the Physicians that this is always a disease of the body, by which the natural passage of the vital essences is intercepted. Similarly, it will not be difficult to believe that there are *Hyphialtes* or Succubi who, in the form and appearance of women, lie down to men; for this sin, which is the chief delight of Demons, has been equally admitted on both sides, and there is no more difficulty in the one than in the other. Yet it is more rarely that the Demons act as Succubi: either because it is not the custom of women, whose modesty in this matter they evilly imitate, to take the initiative in inducing men to commit fornication with them; or because the rabble of witches is chiefly composed of that sex which, owing to its feebleness of understanding, is least able to resist and withstand the wiles of the Devil. And certainly, in all the trials of witches that I have had to do with, this has been the one and only example of a Succuba. But so that it may not be completely isolated, I have decided to add here another example,

which was told me by a most trustworthy man, Melchior Erric, from the private and secret courts of our Most Serene Duke.

There was (he said) at Hemingen, when I was Governor there, a certain witch who, on being bidden by the Judge to tell how he had first been led away to such abominable iniquity and by what wiles the Demon had chiefly seduced him, freely and openly answered as follows: "Being a herdsman, I was going my rounds one morning to collect my cattle, and one of the girls who used to open the stable doors for them stirred my soul with love more than all the rest, so that I began to dream of her more and more both by night and by day. At last, while my thoughts were deeply occupied with her as I was alone in the meadows, there appeared one like her hiding behind a bush. I ran up to seize the prize of my desire, and embraced her in spite of her struggles; and after some repulses she surrendered herself to me on condition that I should acknowledge her as my mistress, and regard her as she were God Himself. I agreed to this. I enjoyed her; and she at once began to enjoy me to such a degree that I was always unhappily subject to her will."

Philostratus, in his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, says that a somewhat similar experience befell Menippus, a disciple of Demetrius the Cynic. For as he was going from Corinth to Cenchreae he met one in the form of a beautiful foreign girl, apparently very rich, who said that she was smitten with love for him, and in a friendly manner invited him to go home with her. He in his turn was taken with love for her and lay with her often, and even began to think about marriage; for she had a house decorated in royal fashion. But after Apollonius had examined everything in that house, he exclaimed that she was a Lamia\* who would quickly devour the young man

\* "Lamia." See "*The Vampire in Europe*," 1929, Chapter I, pp. 3-5.

entirely or afflict him with some notable injury.

It is clear that the Demon holds this to be by far the greatest and richest fruit of his insidious wiles; and that, like a dishonest usurer, he is always adding to it and increasing it by some fresh impiety: drawing error upon error, as S. Jerome says (*In prooemio*, lib. II, *commentariorum in Zachariam*), and always more and more deeply engulfing those whom he has once polluted by crime. And the story with which we are now concerned is very pertinent to this proposition. For first, having seduced the man to an unspeakable venery and pestiferous wenching, he forced him to the atrocious murder of his only son; and then, when he was driven almost to the very last despair by his remorse for so great a crime, he led him headlong to an execrable idolatry which is the culmination of all sin; thus showing himself for what he has been from his beginning, the would-be rival and jealous affecter of Divine honour.

When God wished to test Abraham's faith He appeared to him and, having enumerated all His benefits to him, bade him offer up his son Isaac as a sacrifice. So Abraham, thinking it a sin not to obey God in anything whatsoever, took his son to the mountain which God had named, and was there about to offer the sacrifice demanded had not God Himself interceded to prevent him, proclaiming that He was not a God to wish him to be cruelly bereft of his children, after having graciously made him a father in his extreme old age; but that He only wished to make trial whether he would obey such a command. Even so it now delights that Ape the Demon to reenact an imitation of that which God did so many ages ago; and indeed it is probable that he purposely took the name *Abrahel* in this case to give some verisimilitude to his travesty of Abraham's sacrifice. But in the event he departed from his pattern, in that it was his especial care and purpose to imbue

the father's hands with the unnatural murder of his son, against his deeply inborn parental love. For of a truth he was a murderer from the beginning (*S. John viii*).

That divinations, vaticinations, the calling up of departed spirits, and many other such incantations which men have in the past performed under the Devil's auspices were always accompanied with the solemn festal consecration or sacrifice of some man is shown by Homer in the case of Ulysses, by Silius in that of Scipio, by Valerius Flaccus in that of Eson, by Papinius in that of Teresia, and by Horace in that of certain deadly enchantresses. And nearly all the nations who were addicted to his worship used to befoul his altars with human victims, as Alexander (*Genial. dier.* VI, 20) has shown at great length. Especially were they wont to sacrifice their own children, as Euripides and Plutarch (*Parallel.* 40) tell of Erechtheus; Pausanias of Aristodemus and Epebolus; Plutarch again of Marius and the Carthaginians; and as Pietro Bembo in his *Venetian History*, Book VI, tells of the inhabitants of New Spain before ever the light of Christian truth had shone upon them. Here also I may quote the Bible story of Jephthah, who, when making war upon the Ammonites, vowed that if he gained the victory he would sacrifice the first thing that came out to meet him on his return home: and when his only daughter, who was yet a virgin, came out to meet him, none the less he offered her up as a sacrifice. But although Josephus (*Antiqu.* V, 11) considers that she was put to the knife, Zonaras (*Annal.* tomo I) that she was burned, and Sabellicus (*Ennead* I, 6) that she was immolated as a victim upon the altar; yet there are not wanting those who interpret certain of the Hebrew authorities to the effect that she was only shut away for a time among the virgins dedicated to God, and so was taken away and removed as if by death from the society and common life of



men. For it is written that she obtained permission from her father, before he fulfilled his vow, to bewail her virginity for two months with her fellows. Certainly such a sacrifice would better befit a flesh-eating God, such as Plutarch calls Bacchus: and if it was in truth performed (as I cannot think that the Theologians really believe), I dare to affirm with Josephus that it was not a legitimate sacrifice, nor one that was pleasing to God.

Further, the truth of this story of Petrone of Armentières is beyond all doubt; for it was reported to the Duumvirs of Nancy in absolute completeness with its questions, proofs and arguments. It was, moreover, fully confirmed by the inhabitants of the place, who assured many persons that they had seen with their own eyes the boy recalled to an appearance of life. As for the obscene relations of Petrone with the Succuba, the truth could only be known from the man himself. His murder of his son is paralleled by the following example of Bertrande Barbier (Forbach, Aug. 1587), who nourished a hatred for her son Jacob Cremer because she suspected him of having stolen some money from her; and, after a Demon had first broken open the doors, she entered his house at night and killed him with a poisoned drink. The wife of Stoffel the Clothier held a violet-coloured light to light them at their work; the wife of Quirin the Butcher carried the poison in a black jug; Brice Merg (*ibidem*, *eodemque die*) held the victim's head so that the poison could more easily be poured into his mouth; and the pitiless mother herself administered the poison. This was admitted by Brice when he was examined before the Judges on the same day as Bertrande, and as a further proof he added that he had taken off a blanket to bind the son's limbs, so that he could not struggle when he was touched. Dominique Zabella (Rogeville, 1583) also defiled herself with the murder not only of her son, but also of her husband.

Alexia Belhoria (Blainville, Jan. 1587) poisoned both her first and second husbands. For they think no more of parricide than of plain murder, being equally ready and prompt to commit either sin: so completely have they divorced themselves from all humanity and natural feeling.

☆

## CHAPTER II

*The Taint of Witchcraft is often passed on as it were by Contagion by infected Parents to their Children; for thus they hope to win Favour with their Little Masters. That it is ill done to condone this Crime in Children, as some do, on account of their Age; both because of its atrocious Heinousness, and because there is almost no Hope of ever purifying one who has once been infected.*

THE greed of Satan was always infinite and insatiable; and once he has gained a foothold in any family he has never been known to retreat from it save under the greatest compulsion. Therefore it is always considered to be one of the clearest and surest proofs against those who have been accused of witchcraft, if it is found that they come of parents who have previously been convicted of that crime.

The breed shows its descent;  
Degenerate blood reverts to its first type.

(Seneca, *Hippolytus*.)

And there are daily examples of hereditary crime manifesting itself in the children. It is the Demon's chief care to add daily to the numbers of his subjects; and there is no easier way for him to accomplish this purpose than to drive and compel those who are already in his power to corrupt their children also.

Nicole Morèle (Serre, Jan. 1587) confessed that she was taken by her father to the Demons' Sabbat before

she had reached the age of puberty. Another woman said that, although she was not yet of an age to do after the kind of women, she was sent by her mother into a thick wood where she would find a handsome young man whom she would easily be able to love. And it happened as her mother had said; but as soon as she was in his arms she felt that she had been mocked; for it seemed to her that she was embracing some marble statue, he lay upon her so stiff and heavy. His parents, Erricus and Catharina, tried at Vergaville, July 1586, gave Hennezel a Succuba to wife, who called herself by the name of *Schwartzburg*. As far as he could see when he first approached her, her hair and garments were black, and her feet were misshapen like horses' hoofs: none the less for that he madly loved her and, abjuring all holy thoughts, at once and greedily wallowed in carnal beastliness with her; but it was as if he had to do with a drain filled with cold water, and he went away ashamed and sorrowing with his purpose unaccomplished. Before Dominique Petrone (Gironcourt, Oct. 1586) was twelve years old his mother led him to a similar abominable marriage.

For Colette Fischer (Mainz, May 1585) and many other witches say that it is a frequent custom for Demons to contract marriage with humans; and indeed Bertrande Barbier and Sinchen May of Speirichen (Forbach, Aug. 1587) said that they had been present at such nuptials at times when they happened to be at night in the place where the criminals of that district were crucified; and they added that, in place of the usual gift of a ring, it was enough for the bridegroom to stoop down and blow upon the bride's anus. Agnes Theobald (Puttelange, Sept. 1590) said that she was present when Cathalina and Eugel of Hudlingen were solemnly espoused to their respective Beelzebubs, and that the roasted flesh of a black she-goat was served at the wedding feast. Domin-

ique Fallvaea (S. Blaise la Roche, July 1587) said that she was gathering rushes for binding up the vines with her mother, and they lay down on the ground to rest themselves. After they had talked for a little her mother began to warn her not to be afraid if she saw something unusual, for there would be no danger in it; and as soon as she had said this, there suddenly appeared one in human form who seemed like a shoemaker, for his belt was stained here and there with pitch. This man made her swear an oath to him, and marked her upon the brow with his nail in sign of her new allegiance, and finally defiled her before the eyes of her mother. And the mother in her turn gave herself to him in sight of her daughter. Then they joined hands and danced round for a while; and at last, after he had given them money (or so at first it seemed, but soon it all crumbled to a powder), the Incubus vanished into the air, and they returned home.

Matthieu Amants Rozerat (Huecourt, Sept. 1586), in an attempt to persuade the Judges to consider his age as an excuse for his crime of witchcraft, complained that he had first been committed to that sin when he was of an age at which he was entirely impotent and, because of his weakness, under the direction of others. For he was hardly more than a child when he was taken by his mother, together with his brother and sister, as if to the wedding feast of a kinsman, where they were all compelled to swear allegiance to the Demon, although they were ignorant of what they were doing, after the Demon had at great length held out the promise of still greater enticements.

The following account bears out the truth of those just related. They were preparing the instruments of torture in order to extract from Barbe Gilet (Huecourt, Sept. 1587) a confession of this crime, when she, looking calmly on, spoke as follows: "What madness it is to suppose that you can extort a

confession from me by force! For if I wished I could easily stultify your utmost attempts by means of the power which is at my command to endure every torture. But I gladly spare you all that trouble. For because my Master does not cease to importune me to deliver into his power my four young children which still survive of many that I have borne, I would far rather submit myself to the cruellest death if by that means I may save my little ones from such a miserable fate as I have myself suffered all this time. For if I am acquitted of this charge it remains for me to choose either to suffer an even more terrible death at the hands of my Master, or sorely against my will to perform his demands with regard to my children."

The following is to the same effect. Françoise Hacquart of Villé (1591), in order at last to free herself from such molestation, had abandoned to the Demon her daughter Jana when she was as yet scarcely seven years old; and among her other confessions she chanced to hint this fact to the Judge. As the daughter's testimony confirmed this statement, and since all further doubt was removed by the girl's sure and unerring account of the nocturnal assemblies of witches at which she said she had been present, all began to form the opinion that she was equally guilty with her mother of that crime. But because she did not seem to be of a suitable age to be punished by the law (for it was not found that she had as yet committed any venomous act of bewitchment), the Lady of the Manor undertook to wean her from those unspeakable habits by the most holy teaching within her means. Accordingly, after the mother had suffered her punishment, she kept her for some time under the care and admonition of a certain matron, until it seemed to everybody that she had recovered her senses and her former freedom, having cast off the yoke of the Demon. But alas! one night as she was sleeping as usual with the maid-servants, the

Demon caught her up as if to carry her away; and it is thought that he would have done so had he not been prevented by the servants' repeatedly calling on the Name of JESUS; but being thus disturbed he left his destined prey hanging upon the beams of the roof, and departed. This was no mere fabrication of the servants generated by a desire to spread an idle rumour; for all the neighbours ran up at their cries, and saw the thing with their own eyes. And a further proof that no part of this story was a deceitful or malicious invention was provided by the fact that the girl remained for the whole of eight days and nights in a miserable state of stupor without eating or speaking or sleeping. For Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* XI, cap. ult.) is our authority that it is impossible to endure starvation without succumbing for more than seven days; and if ever it were to continue to the eleventh day it must be admitted to be a miraculous happening.

There have been many others within my memory led away at a tender age by their parents to sin whom, since they appeared to be already capable of guilt, we Duumvirs have sentenced to be stripped and beaten with rods around the place where their parents were being burned alive. This has been the custom for many years; yet I have never thought that the law was fully satisfied by such methods; especially if, as will be said later, the child be found to be of an age capable of guilt and it is proved that he has committed a poisonous act of witchcraft; for it seems to me that, out of consideration for the public safety, such children ought in addition to be banished and exiled from the boundaries of human nature. For as to the argument that punishment has a corrective and ameliorating effect upon criminals, I fear that it is vain to apply it to such cases as we are considering; for experience has shown that they who have fallen into the power of the Demon can rarely be rescued except



by death, so tenacious is he of his hold upon that to which he has a right, and so slow to loose anything from his clutches. And—if it is relevant to the question to say so—what easier window to sin could be opened, what greater hope of impunity could be offered or given, than if any just or legitimate excuse should be admitted for so great and detestable a crime? Therefore let those whose office it is to try such cases consider whether the laws that condone and excuse a criminal on account of the innocence of his age ought rightly to be applied to this crime, which is not only beyond hope, but even tightens its grip with increasing years. For we read that other far lighter sins have been visited with the last severity as well by divine as by human law. Forty-two children were rent in pieces by two bears for no other reason than that they followed Elisha, mocking him and saying: "Go up, thou bald head!" Trebius the German Legate inflicted the extreme penalty upon an impubic child, as Marcianus\* observed in his Eleventh Book *De Publicis Judiciis*, simply because, although he was lying at his master's feet when he was killed, he did not report the murder. There is also the famous Athenian judgement, by which a child was condemned to death because he had plucked the eyes out of a crow; for by that he had given the fullest indication of the sort of crimes he would commit as a grown man. A like consideration induced me and my colleagues a few years ago to sentence a thief not yet seventeen years old to be crucified; for he had three times been scourged, and had even been branded upon one shoulder, and yet continued to live a life of theft and robbery. Bodin in his *Démonomanie* (III, 5) records that by the verdict of the Parisian Senate the same

sentence was passed on an eleven-year-old boy because he had killed another boy with a stone and had hidden the body.

In short, to return to the point from which I have digressed, it is not just to purchase the safety of one at the price of the manifest danger of many innocent persons undeserving of punishment. For it is beyond doubt that the crimes which they commit at another's behest while still in ignorance of their nature, they will most ardently pursue on their own behalf when riper years have fully kindled in them the lust of anger and revenge. There seems to be more wisdom in what Menander (*Cic. Epist. II. ad Brutum*) says of this sort of crime; that it is better met with a salutary severity than with a profitless show of mercy. Gellius (XX, 1) also commends the harshness of Sextus Caccilius in punishing the crime of sorcery as a stern encouragement to good and prudent living. There should be no lack of examples to prove that their age does not restrain such children from committing deeds of witchcraft at the instigation of their parents; for I remember reading in the reports of the trials of such that there have been children who have confessed that they carried hidden under their nails a poison given them by their parents, and that they used to scratch their playfellows and thus often kill them. But I cannot now recall their names or the time of their trials; for I had not yet thought of writing this work when I read them.

But one instance will suffice which, when I was on the point of publishing this work, came before us Duumvirs at Barr in May 1591. This was the case of a boy not yet seven years old, one Laurence of Ars-sur-Moselle, tried at Serre in May 1581, who made it perfectly clear by his own account that he had been taken by his parents to the execrable Demons' Meeting, where he had been set to turn the spit and see to the roasting of the meat; and

\* "Marcianus." Aelius Marcianus, a Roman jurist who lived under Caracalla and Alexander Severus. His works are frequently quoted in the Digest.

further, that his Little Master, who called himself *Verd-Joli*, had more than once made him take some poison with which he might kill the cattle of anyone who caused him even the slightest annoyance; and that this proved in the event to be so.

Upon this there arose no small dispute and dissension among the Judges, as to what course should be taken with the boy who had perpetrated such deeds. For some argued that it was not just that human society should be any longer burdened with one who had so basely become an enemy of the human race; that he did not appear to deserve pity, who had had no pity for anyone whom he had wished to injure: that his life ought not to be spared, who had in the vilest manner deprived others of life and would, unless God prevented it, continue to do so: that he was an outcast of the last depravity, who would not have been spared even by the laws of the Pagans, who did not follow the way of piety as we do: that one polluted by so great a crime must undoubtedly be put to death, even as a beast to which a woman has lain down, that there should remain no trace or memory of so execrable and detestable a thing: that it was impossible to plead in his defence innocence of intent, on which account children are spared in other cases; for none could deny that he had shown that persistence of purpose which belongs to one who harbours the memory of an injury received in spite of the lapse of time; and, moreover, he had taken his revenge in a secret and skulking manner, like one who was quite conscious of wrongdoing. In the case of a manifestly hideous crime it is not enough to administer the home discipline and admonishment usually meted out to children; it must be brought before the Judges and punished with the full severity of the law; that there could be no question of granting impunity on account of the prisoner's age when it was shown that his crime proceeded

from *malice prepense*: that the present case belonged to that category was sufficiently proved by the prisoner's hatreds, thefts, lies, jealousies and perjuries and such preliminary sins, to which no one would deny that his childish age was subject: that the only crime of which he had not been guilty before the age of puberty was that of venery, and that only because his powers were not yet sufficiently developed to perform that act: and that S. Gregory of Nyssa had expressed the same opinion in his *Antiqua* (Cap. 1, *de delict. puer.*). Finally, it was now quite a common experience to find boys of seven years more cunningly adept in crime than, in less enlightened times, were those who had already attained the age of puberty; for it may truly be said that children are now so precociously and prematurely knowing and shrewd that, as the lawyers say, they easily make good with their malice the deficiencies of their age.

On the other hand, those who took a more lenient view argued that he who did not know what he was doing could not be said to have deserted to the enemy: that for this reason it used to be the custom to pardon a recruit the first time he deserted, on the ground that he was as yet ignorant of military discipline: that it could not be presumed that an act had been committed in pitiless cruelty by one whose nature and character it is to abhor and abominate nothing so much as cruelty: that children cannot endure the mere sight of slaughter, wounds, fires, and other such calamities; and that it is clearly shown by experience that they immediately weep and howl at the misfortunes of others: that if they have ever been known to do otherwise, it must be considered as being a prodigy and that their actions have not conformed to their wishes; and there can be no crime where there is no criminal intent. That they are no more the cause of another's death than are the knife, cudgel, stones or poison, or other instrument by which a man's life may

be taken; and no sane man would be so foolish as to wreak vengeance upon such things because they had been instrumental in a man's murder, for that would be like a dog biting the stone thrown at it and leaving alone him who threw it. Certainly there were formerly certain persons sacred and dedicated to the Gods of the Lower World, upon whom anyone might with impunity commit murder or any violence; but such persons willingly and knowingly offered themselves for that foul sacrifice in return for an annual public contribution of wholesome food; and this was done for the purpose of purifying their country or expiating some crime, plague or portent, as it was in the case of the scapegoat which the Hebrews used to send out into the wilderness. But nothing of this could rightly be applied to this boy, who had made no vow in return for a reward; who would not by his death expiate a public danger or the death of another; whose punishment, in short, would in no way be exemplary save as a reproach to Nature for not having more wisely and completely instructed and fortified the early childhood of mankind. That it was in no sense apposite to instance the fact that an animal which has once been polluted and contaminated by a man's lust is put to death that the remembrance of it may be wiped out; for there was a vast difference between slaughtering an animal, which is born in order to be slaughtered, and taking the life of a human being for whose benefit Nature allowed the gift of life to the other animals. Not even the law always demanded the same punishment for the same offence; but lightens the sentence for one man on account of his position and fortune, while it increases and makes it heavier for another on account of his meanness and poverty; for (as Pliny says) nothing could be more inequitable than to pass an equal sentence upon all and sundry. It was, then, unworthily done to demand that men

and beasts should be subject to the same law. It in no way detracted from the innocence and ingenuousness of children that they had a long memory for an injury; that they gladly seized upon a chance to repay one; or that they took care not to be caught in the act; for all this was true also of the brute beasts, to which no one would for that reason rightly attribute a considered purpose. That the heinousness of a deed depended upon the intention of the doer; and for that reason the law dealt more leniently with a murderer whose only intention was to wound his victim; but there could be no question of crime on the part of a child not yet capable of guilt, and far less ought there to be any question of the degree of his culpability; for the law declares that what does not exist cannot be qualified. That it was beside the point to distinguish here between domestic discipline and public example; for it was no less repugnant to the law, which is, as Aristotle says, based upon principles of proportion, to impose a public punishment for murder upon a child of tender age than to sentence an adult man to be beaten and chastised with rods in his own house for the same offence. That childhood was entirely innocent of guile and incapable of anything which ought to be imputed to malice; for when Demosthenes spoke of himself as still impubic and quite a mere lad, Ulpian notes (1. 3, §1, *De sepulch. viol. Jac. Cuiatius observat.* 1. VI, cap. 22) that he meant it to be understood that he was not yet capable of guilt: nor did it at all militate against this view that boys tell lies through fear of the rod; that they are spiteful to their fellows in case of a dispute; that they suffer their masters with an ill grace, and often hate them; that they do not refrain from laying their hands on others' property; for these are only the rudiments and cradle of vice, not consummated crimes and sins which must be restrained and vindicated by human



laws. And as to the allegation that children develop knowledge and understanding earlier than they used to do formerly, that was an age-old complaint (Horace, *Carm.* III, 7):

What is there grows not worse to-day?  
Our grandfathers were bad, they say;  
Our fathers worse; and we, still worse,  
Shall soon beget a greater curse.

And in this opinion Horace was followed many years later by Salvius Julianus\* (1. *apud*, § *si quis cum tutor. de Do. excusa*), Domitius Ulpianus† (1. *Impuberem De furt. 1. Haeredib. sub f. de Dolo.*), Julius Paulus‡ (1. 4, *de tribut. actione*), and several other Jurisconsults; but they all denied that children were capable of guilt, except such as were on the verge of puberty, that is (according to Callistratus§), when they were within no more than six months of that age, or at the most within a year, as Galen explains it in his *Aphorisms* (III, 20), for they have not arrived at years of discretion until that age. Finally, that it should be considered a venial offence if anyone commits a crime at the command of one

whom he is compelled to obey; and to what extent children of a tender age are subject to the authority of their parents would easily be judged by all who were willing to recall their own experiences at that age.

Sentence was passed in accordance with the latter view because it seemed to be the more lenient. But because the sin of witchcraft is said to be scarcely possible to expiate, and that if there is any means of effecting this it must come from the daily penance and discipline imposed by those who have shut themselves away from the world to cultivate a sterner and more rigid devotion, it was decided to place the boy in a Convent of Minims|| which stood near the place where the trial was heard, and existed until a short time ago. For nearly all said that there was no hope of a change of heart, and that they must expect nothing if he could not win back his salvation by that means. And may God the Almighty, God the Father of light, mercy and life grant that he may be saved, that at last men may have a surer and more certain guide as to how they should conduct future trials of this sort! For of a truth in all my experience hitherto I have not heard of a single witch who has returned to bear good fruit; but, on the contrary, they all with one mouth assert that, once they have given their allegiance to the Demon, they may not with impunity be false to him. And if ever they wish to renounce him, or if they grow weary of him because he fails to fulfil his promises, or becomes intolerably violent or importunate; yet they are unable to free

\* "Salvius." Salvius Julianus, a Roman jurist. Under Hadrian and the Antonines he was *praefectus urbi*, and twice consul. By the order of Hadrian he drew up the "*edictum perpetuum*," which is of considerable importance in the history of Roman jurisprudence.

† "Ulpianus." The date of the birth of this celebrated jurist is unknown, but the greater part of his works were written during the reign of Caracalla. He was murdered by the soldiery in 228. The compilers of the "*Digest*" gathered so much from his work that these excerpts form about one-third of the whole body of that code.

‡ "Julius Paulus." One of the most distinguished of the Roman jurists, and perhaps the most fertile of all the Latin law writers. Upwards of seventy separate works by this authority are quoted in the "*Digest*." He survived his contemporary Ulpian.

§ "Callistratus." This jurist, who is frequently cited in the "*Digest*," wrote at least as late as the days of Severus and Caracalla, A.D. 195-211.

|| "Minims." A religious order founded by S. Francis of Paula. At first propagated in Italy, they were introduced by special royal favour into France, whither the founder was called in 1482. At his death in 1507 there existed five provinces spread over Italy, France, Spain and Germany. The rule is exceedingly strict, and members of this family are called upon to practise extraordinary self-abnegation and to cultivate a spirit of humblest penitence.

themselves because of his continual and assiduous urgings, threats and blows. This very month, at Dombasle-en-Argonne, July 1591,) Jean Bursar asserted that he had very often tried to do this, but in vain.

*facilis descensus Auerni:  
At reuocare gradum, superasque euadere ad  
auras,  
Hoc opus, hic labor est.*

Yet let us confess that all these things depend upon the will and judgement of Almighty God; and that this difficulty of emerging from such sin arises not so much from the untiring energy of the Demon, as from a just ordinance of God that witches, being deprived of and cut off from His grace, cannot by their own power and strength free themselves from the chains of the Devil.



### CHAPTER III

*That Witches make Evil Use of Human Corpses; especially of Abortive Births, Criminals put to Death by the Law, or any that have died some Shameful or Dishonourable Death.*

WE have the authority of Porphyrius, *De Sacrificiis*, and Psellus, *De Daemonibus*, that witches very often make foul use of human corpses in their evil works;\* the supposition being that, as soon as souls are freed from their earthly connexion, they become endowed with powers of vaticination; but that they still retain some contact with their former house of flesh, and are therefore believed to hover around and haunt their dead bodies. But this seems to me entirely improbable; for no one ever yearns for the prison from which he has escaped, nor can there be any need for a soul that has at last attained to a state of purity to have

any dealing with a fetid and putrid corpse; and the separation effected by death between soul and body, until we appear before the judgement seat of Christ, is greater than any that can be wrought or thought (II. *Corinthians* v. 10). It is probable, therefore, that this is all a deliberate and malicious invention of the Demons that they may more and more deceive human nature, and still more ignominiously abuse mortal remains in their contrivances for the destruction of the human race. Tacitus (*Annal.* II), speaking of Piso who was suspected of sorcery, says: "There were found the remains of human bodies taken from the ground and their tombs, spells and enchantments, and the name of Germanicus scratched on tablets of lead; decomposed flesh half burned, and other cantrips by which it is believed that souls are doomed to the infernal deities." Apuleius (*Golden Ass*, Bk. II) also touches this point when he assigns the reason for the practice at Larissa in Thessaly of keeping a watch during the night over the bodies of the dead, and says: "Without doubt it was to prevent the witches, who infested that country, from shamefully biting pieces out of them for use in bringing calamity upon the living."

The witches of our own time also use such practices, especially when they can come by the corpse of a man who has been put to death and exposed upon a cross as a public example. For they derive the material for their evil charms not only from the corpse, but even from the instruments of its punishment, such as the rope, the chains, the stake, or the fetters; for it is a common belief among them that there is some virtue and power in such things in the preparation of their magic spells. They can have no other reason for possessing themselves of the abortive births of women; for they make from the skin of these a parchment which they inscribe with some barbarous and unknown characters and afterwards use in the attainment of

\* "Evil Works." See Guazzo, "Compendium Maleficarum," Book II, Chapter II.

their dearest wishes. As to this, Agrippa and Petrus de Abano and Weyer, three masters in damnable magic, have left instructions which surpass all human nature. Others again cook the foetus in its entirety until it is either reduced to dry ashes or melted into a mass with which they mix certain other ingredients. Giovanni Battista Porta of Naples, in the Second Book of his *Natural Magic*, observes that this practice was used in his time. Pliny wrote that not only midwives, but harlots also, used thus to dislimb abortions for the purpose of preparing poisons for their crimes. And the practice is common to-day in German Lorraine, as I have often found in my examinations of witches on a capital charge.

Anna Ruffa, at Dieuze, October 1586, acknowledged that she had helped a witch named Lolla to dig up a corpse which had recently been buried by the great Gate of Dieuze, and that from its charred ashes they had concocted a potion which would cause the certain death of those whom they wished to kill. Catharina of Metingow (*ibidem*, Sept. 1586) added that to make it nastier to the taste, she used to mix with the potion lupine, ferns, elecampane, ox-gall, soot, or anything else that was even more bitter; for they force the poison into their victims' mouths against their will and in spite of their utmost struggles, as will be shown later. This is borne out by the testimony of Meg Bricq at Forpach, Aug. 1587, concerning the digging up of the corpse of an infant which had been buried the day before by its father, Faber Wolf. His account differs from the one above in only one respect; for he did not burn the body to ashes, but melted it down into a lump from which he could the more easily prepare his unguent, afterwards reducing the bones to ashes with which to sprinkle the trees that their fruit might fail. This agrees with the statement of Fuxena Eugel at Bulligny, April 1586, that she used to scatter

such ashes to the winds with curses and incantations, either to burn off the blossom from the trees or to kill the crops. Maria, the wife of Johann Schneider, who lived in Metzerech, recounted that Joanneta, the wife of Soniaus Mathes, gave premature birth to a child which she secretly buried in the floor of the apartment in which she lived; but certain witches got wind of this and dug it up again shortly afterwards and reduced it to an ointment, with which she herself had at times anointed a besom upon which she sat and was borne up on high to Bruch, the place appointed for the Sabbat by her Little Master, *Rousgen*. Antoine Welsch at Guerningen, Dec. 1589, said that he had been told of similar doings by the wives of Gross Michel and Besskess, each of whom was very well known to him among the confederacy of witches; namely, that not long since they had dug up from the cemetery at Guerningen two such corpses, which had lately been buried by their parents, Bernhardt and Antoine Lerchen, and that after consuming them in fire they had converted them to their magic uses; but first they cut off the right arm with the shoulder and ribs belonging to it, to be used as a light in case they wished to administer poison to anybody at night. This is a marvellous matter which might well appear to be fabulous. The finger-tips of that dismembered limb used to burn with a blue sulphurous flame until they had entirely completed the business which they had in hand; and when the flame was extinguished the fingers would be just as whole and unimpaired as if they had not been providing the tinder for a light; and however often they had cause to use it, the fingers were still found to be undiminished. Not long after he had made this statement, it was confirmed in almost the same words by the wife of that Bernhardt (Guerningen, Jan. 1590); and she did not deny the shameful deeds which she had committed upon her own offspring; how for her hellish



purposes she had torn it in pieces, roasted it and destroyed it.

To any who care to remember the recorded stories of times past, and to consider carefully the rumours which are daily spread abroad, it will not appear that this is any new matter or more difficult to believe than many of the portents to which Demons give rise every day. Pliny tells that, while he was watching by the rampart, he saw a light like a star upon the soldiers' spears, and flames darting about among the sail-yards without doing any damage: these flames were called by the sailors of that time Castor and Pollux; but to-day, as I hear, they call them S. Anselm's fire.\* Now let us grant that this is caused by exhalations from the earth or the sea, which, vibrating about the ends of the sail-yards, burst into flame; let us grant that these exhalations hover about the ends of the spars just as iron is attracted by a magnet: how is it that fire, which is quick to consume all other things, operates in this case without the least burning or damage, and leaves not the slightest trace of itself behind? For, as Plutarch says, fire is a ravenous and devouring beast which consumes everything with which it comes in contact. If this seems incredible in the case of inanimate

objects devoid of feeling, it must appear miraculous that flames should for a considerable time adhere to a living body without causing any injury or lesion in the skin. Yet when Lucius Martius, after the assassination of the Scipios in Spain, was urging and stirring up his soldiers to vengeance, a flame shone out from his head: the same thing was seen upon Servius Tullus as a child when he was asleep; and at Anagnia a slave's tunic burst into flames, but after his death no trace of fire could be found upon him (*Julius Obsequens, De Prodigis*): these are stories from Roman history. And Vergil, who (as Macrobius says) often wrapped up the truth in fiction, by this augury foreshadowed the royal nature of Ascanius (*Aen. II, 683*):

Lo, a light flame shone from Iulus' crown,  
And softly touched his hair, and played around  
His temples; yet it harmed him not at all.

We must, then, conclude that this is not the sort of fire which feeds upon that which gives it life, like the fire which we use every day; but that it is no more than a false appearance devised by the Demon, who is quick to deceive the eyes of men in far more difficult matters than this.

I remember also having read in the confessions of witches about wandering balls of fire often seen by them at night, and speaking with a human voice; but I am without my memoranda of the place and time of such appearances. It is probable that these are no more than the *ignes fatui* described to us by the philosophers, which are often seen by travellers in hilly or marshy places. It is only to be expected that they should find a natural origin for these phenomena, seeing that they trace everything to natural sources and admit no other artificer or workman than Nature in any case whatever. Yet the common opinion still holds that this is an

\* "S. Anselm's fire." Rather S. Elmo's fire. St. Peter Gonzalez was born in 1190 at Astorta, Spain; and died 15th of April, 1246, at Tuy. He entered the Dominican Order, and became a famous preacher, but, so far from seeking preferment and renown, he devoted his life to the welfare of the ignorant mariners in Galicia and along the coast of Spain. He is buried in the cathedral of Tuy. S. Elmo's fire is a pale electrical discharge sometimes seen on stormy nights on the tips of spires, about the deck and rigging of ships, in the shape of a ball or brush, singly or in pairs, particularly at the masts and yard-arms. The mariners believe them to be the souls of the departed, whence they are also called *corposant* ("corpo santo"). The ancients called them *Helena fire* when seen singly, and *Castor and Pollux* when in pairs.

apparition or spectre. Pontius Tiar-dacus \* (*De uniuersitate*) says that the Gauls in their vernacular tongue very appositely call it *Aduiz*, that is, a Phantasm; a name which is ordinarily given to such images as are apparent only to the sight. And this belief is not altogether without reason, for in the first place this flame is different in its movements from natural fire, which can never run along without some material to feed upon; and in the places where the Will-o'-the-wisp is seen no one has ever found fuel enough to support such a flame. Then, again, it lures travellers into ponds and river whirlpools and steep places; and this not unjustly gives rise to a suspicion that there is some evil and mischievous spirit in it, which thus holds out to men a torch to entice them to destruction and death.

It is probable that it happened so in that abominable business of which we have just written; namely, that it was not a true flame which appeared on the finger-tips of the arm torn from the corpse, but only a Demon in the form of a flame, who chooses such wretched human remains as the fittest instrument for his dark deeds, persuading his subjects that there is some virtue in them for the performance of their most difficult tasks; and especially if the corpse has been the victim of some misfortune, an abortive birth, or one killed by poison or the sword or by some other violent death. For in such violence lies his ultimate triumph; this is the ripest fruit and by far the richest reward of all his malice and scheming. Before closing this discussion I will add one or two examples.

Paul the Deacon † (*Lib. XX, rerum*

\* "*Pontius Tiardacus.*" The great work of Bishop Ponce de Tyard, "*De Uniuersitate*," was long held in highest esteem, and was rendered even better known by the French translation "*L'Univers, ou discours des parties et de la nature du monde*," 1557.

† "*Paul the Deacon.*" Paulus Diaconus, also named Casinensis, historian, was born at

*Romanorum, sub Theodosio*) says that when Pergamus was being besieged by the Saracens, the citizens (as it is the way of those in desperate straits to fly to evil courses) consulted a certain sorcerer as to how they could free their city from the siege. He answered that they would certainly succeed in this if they dipped their right arms in a vessel in which had been boiled a foetus forcibly cut from a pregnant woman. This they most religiously did; yet they fell none the less into the hands of their enemies; for it is to be thought that the Demon devised that lie for no other purpose than, through that atrocious parricide, to heap sin upon sin on the people of Pergamus and so bring them to their destruction. They are not the only ones who have been befouled by that bloody crime. Berosus ‡ (if the writings attributed to him are really his), together with Megasthenes § and Myrsilus || and other ancient authors, wrote that at one time God sent a flood to punish men for their custom of ripping infants from their mothers' wombs, for use either at their execrable banquets or for

*Friuli about 720, and died on the 13th April, probably in 799. His first literary work was the "Historia Romana," which is here quoted. It is now considered of little value, but during the Middle Ages it was highly esteemed and frequently consulted as an authority.*

‡ "*Berosus.*" A priest of Belus at Babylon who lived in the reign of Antiochus II, 261-246 B.C., and wrote in Greek a history of Babylonia in three books. The work, the materials for which were derived from the Archives in the temple of Belus, is lost, but even the quotations preserved in ancient authors are valuable.

§ "*Megasthenes.*" A Greek writer who was sent by Seleucus Nicator as ambassador to Sandracottus, King of the Prasii, a great and powerful people on the Ganges. Megasthenes wrote a work on India in four books entitled "*Indica*," to which the Greek geographers are much indebted.

|| "*Myrsilus.*" A Greek historical writer of uncertain date, a native of Lesbos, from whom Dionysius of Halicarnassus borrowed a part of his account of the Pelasgians.

compounding and mixing poisons for others. We read of infants being put to the former use in Aristotle's *Ethics* (VIII, 5), where he writes to Nicomachus of a woman so vicious and depraved that she used to rip open the wombs of pregnant women and devour the foetus which she had drawn from them. Apollonius (*Apud Philostratum*, IV, 8), Diodorus (*Lib. XX*), and the Scholiast upon Aristophanes in the *Wasps* mention that this was also formerly the custom of Lamias. And Horace (*Ars Poet.*, 340) also says:

From the bloated body of an aged witch

They cut a child that was not yet quite dead.

We have already recorded the detailed testimony of Dominique Isabelle to the effect that the witches of to-day practise the same custom.

Of the second use to which they put such corpses the following example was brought to my notice not long before I thought of publishing this work. Johann Molitor of Welferdingen had a year-old child which was his chief delight; and Agathina of Pettelange, Anna of Miltzingen, and Mayeta of Hochit stole it from its cradle and placed it upon a burning pyre which they had built for that purpose on a steep mountain called *La Grise*; and they carefully collected its burned ashes and mixed them into a friable mass with dew shaken from the grass and ears of corn. This they used for sprinkling the vines and crops and trees, so that their blossom should perish and the fruit fail. But this is perhaps more than enough about a particularly unpleasant subject.

☆

## CHAPTER IV

*That the Snares set by Witches for Mankind can with the greatest Difficulty be avoided; for in some unknown Shape and Form they slip into Locked and Barred Houses by Night, and by their Dread Arts overpower with the Heaviest Sleep those who are there in Bed, and do many other Marvels; against which there is no more Effective Protection than the Prayers with which we are accustomed to entrust and commend ourselves to God on going to Bed. With somewhat concerning the Method by which they cause that Charmed Sleep.*

IT is not without cause that suspected witches are everywhere objects of fear. For although their power to injure whomsoever they will is not unlimited, as may be seen in the story of Asmodeus\* the slayer of Sara's husbands (*Tobit viii*) yet, with the will of God, our own sins often render us liable to injury at their hands, as Antoine Welsch (Guermingen, Dec. 1589), who was convicted on

\* "Asmodeus." τὸ πονηρὸν δαιμόνιον. A demon identified by some rabbis with Samaël. He is also called Chammadaï and Sydonai. A few commentators even hold that he is the same as Beelzebub or Apollyon (*"Apocalypse," ix. 2*), an extremely unlikely view. Johan Weyer, however, in his "*Pseudo-monarchia demonum*," gives some fantastic details concerning him. It has been suggested that Asmodeus is perhaps the Persian "*Aēshma datva*," who in the "*Avesta*" is next to Angromainyus, the chief of evil spirits. But the name Asmodeus may be Semitic. The Aramaic word "*āshmeday*" is cognate with the Hebrew "*hashmed*," "*destruction*." Talmudic legend says that Asmodeus, or Asmodai, was implicated in the drunkenness of Noe, and has some truly extravagant tales concerning him and King Solomon. Moreover, Asmodeus is regarded as the counterpart of Lilith, and sometimes described as a jocular elf. (Cf. Le Sage's "*Le Diable Boiteux*." Wunsche, "*Der bab. Talm.*" II, 180-83. Asmodeus was one of the devils who possessed Madeleine Bavent of the convent of SS. Louis and Elizabeth at Louviers in 1642-43.



his own confession of witchcraft, made clear. And no man is so "Upright of life and free from crime" (*Hor. Carm.*, I, 22), that his conscience does not prick him for some sin: no man is so diligent and attentive in his religious observances but that sometimes, through stress of business, he neglects those daily prayers and devotions with which he is accustomed to place himself in the care and protection of God; and therefore it is not without reason that even the most confident are sorely subject to this fear (*S. August, Civ. Dei*, XXI, 14). Besides, our daily experience of the fact is proof enough that it is no light danger that threatens us from this source. For witches approach men with their poisons while they are off their guard, or often even when they are asleep at night; and they even entrap the vigilant with their wiles: so that it seems hardly possible to guard against them by human foresight and precaution.

There are in this book many stories which should abundantly satisfy the reader on this point; but since they have a rather fresh application here, and since they are not without some entertaining qualities, I trust that I shall not seem tedious if I add a few more examples at some length. And first of all it is worth recording the evidence given by a certain witness during the trial on a capital charge of Margareta Luodman (*Vergaville*, Jan. 1587). Among other admissions, this woman of her own accord acknowledged that she had entered the house of that witness one night with the intention of forcing poison down his throat while he was in a heavy sleep, and that she had only just failed in the attempt, for everything seemed to be going well for her. But unfortunately he had surprised her by awaking from his sleep, so that she and her associates in crime were compelled to take to flight without accomplishing their purpose; while he pursued them with a weapon and, when he could not

catch them, hurled the most terrible threats after them. To probe this matter more thoroughly the witness in question was examined, and in the fullest manner confirmed all that the witch had said; namely, that they had attempted to poison him, and had only been prevented by his happening to awake. For he had not yet been touched by their unguents, and he had protected himself against so great a peril and danger with the sign of the Cross and the Lord's Prayer. Further, that it was true that he had pursued them for a long way with a weapon, but had been unable to catch them.

Catharina of Metingow (*Vergaville*, Sept. 1587) and the youth Hennezel (of whom I have lately made mention), Jacoba Weher (*Vergaville*, Oct. 1584), Gaspar Haffner (*Morhang*, Aug. 1587), Margareta Jenina (*Vergaville*, Jan. 1587), the same Margareta Luodman, Sennel of Armentières (*Dieuze*, Sept. 1586), and nearly all who have been taken up for this crime in German Lorraine, agreed in asserting that, after they had served them for some years, their Demons had given them this power of penetrating into houses, so that they could easily make their way in through the narrowest crack after they had shrunk to the shape of mice or cats or locusts or some other small animal of that sort, according to their needs; and once they were inside they could, if they wished, resume their proper form and so conveniently execute their designs in the manner that has been described: namely, first to anoint the limbs of their intended victim to prevent his awakening, and then to hold his mouth open forcibly so that he should reject none of the poison which they pour into his mouth by the light of a candle burning with a sulphurous flame. The sworn account of herself left by this Margareta Jenina is astounding. She conceived a violent hatred for her son Jacquelin because he kept pestering her to go and make money in the neighbouring market towns of Alsace,

and at last determined to use any means to rid herself of his importunacy. With this purpose she and her accomplices were carried by the Demon in the dead of night to his house in Saxbringen, where they aroused him from sleep, dragged him from bed, and set him before the fire to roast him alive if they were able; but, being prevented by some fate, they turned their thoughts to some other form of injury. So they took a piece of brick from the floor, opened his side, and inserted it, whereupon the wound at once closed up; and after many months of agony the brick burst forth again in the sight of many.

The following story of Bertrande Barbier (Forpach, Aug. 1587) is very similar. She confessed that, with the help of her associate witches, she had inserted a bone in the neck of one Elisa because she had refused her a mug of milk. In the same way Sennel of Armentières at Dieuze, September 1586, said that she had fixed a splinter from a sheep's rib in the top of Philip Pistor's foot, having first made an incision with a fish's spine; and that a callosity formed over it and caused him violent and continuous pain. This was afterwards confirmed by Pistor himself.

Since we are on the subject of these injuries so secretly and astoundingly caused by witchcraft, I will add one more example which must excite no little wonder. Jana Blasias of Bainsles-Bains had a son-in-law named Rayner with whom she lived in the same house. Claude Gerard had given this Rayner his breeches to mend, but had been quite unable to get them back from him for his use; and at last in exasperation he went to Rayner to ask him when he was going to make an end of his subterfuges and delays, but found that he was not in the house and that only Blasias, his mother-in-law, was sitting by the hearth with his family. So he asked her to return him his breeches, saying that if her fine son-in-law had done making a fool of him

he would soon find someone else who would mend them just as well. This made her very angry, but she decided to say nothing and to wait until she could take some practical revenge on him; and she asked him to wait a few more days, when he should have his breeches back: meanwhile she asked him to be so good as to sit down by the hearth with her for a little and taste one of her apples that she had just baked. Gerard declined this invitation more than once, saying that he had no leisure to stay any longer, and that he had no wish for the food she was offering him; but one of the apples stuck to the palm of his hand and was so hot that he at once tried to shake it off with the other hand; whereupon both his hands were so stuck together that they seemed as if they would grow into one, and all the time the apple in the middle was burning them so that it nearly drove him mad. He rushed out calling upon everyone he met for mercy; and everybody brought the remedy that seemed best to him, some saying that the burning should be cooled in water, and others that his hands must be forced apart with instruments. But when none of these proved of any use, and it became clear that his misfortune was due to witchcraft, one of the neighbours who was rather more shrewd told him to go back to the place where the evil had first befallen him. This he did, and the old beldame, Blasias, treated the affair as a joke and laughed at him; yet she rubbed his arm a little down to the hand, until the apple dropped out; and at once the pain ceased, and he regained the full use of his hands.

In these stories the following points appear to me chiefly worthy of note. First, that, just as emperors grant certain military rewards only to their veteran soldiers, so the Demon grants this power (according to the witches' belief) of changing themselves into other forms only to those who have served him for many years and have by

their evil deeds given proof of their loyalty to him; and that this is, as it were, their highest reward and prize for long and faithful service. This was fully shown by the confession of Erricus Carmutius at Pagny in 1583, and not a few others of that rabble, whose names, however, I cannot now find in my note-book.

Secondly, I cannot omit to remark upon that heavy sleep with which witches bind their victims before they administer their poison to them. The Gospel (*S. Matthew xxiv, 43*) warns us to watch unceasingly that the thief may not break in and take us asleep and off our guard. Now the surest watch is that kept by God over us in answer to our prayers. "Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (*Psalm xci*) safe from all those dangers of which He is not the author or source. "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (*Psalm cxxvii*). It may be that some will laugh at the notion of this charmed sleep as a foolish old wives' tale. I shall not try to convince them by quoting how Homer's Helen mixed a draught of wine to bring oblivion of all ills or, as Pliny interprets it, delightful dreams (*Odyss. IV, 221; XXVI, 1*): nor what Papinius\* writes about the enchanted wand of Mercury: nor Vergil's twig drugged with Stygian powers (*Aen. VI*): for these are matters of poetic fiction, and lack the very stamp of truth. I shall

\* "Papinius." P. Papinius Statius. The reference is to a passage in the "Sylvae," II, i, 189-90:

*Quid mihi gaudenti proles Cyllenias, uirga  
Nuntiat?*

also to a passage of the "Thebaidos," II, 69-70:

*nec summa Tonantis  
Iussa, nec Arcadiae retinent spiramina uirgae.*  
Upon this Barthius glosses: "De 'uirgae Mercurialis' potestate peculiarem Tractat. satis mysteriodes damus in superstitionum magno Coman."

be content to adduce such instances as are provided by everyday use and experience. For who does not know that there are in nature many substances the internal or external application of which induces not only drowsiness or sleep, but utter unconsciousness and insensitiveness to the most violent pain? Surgeons know the use of such narcotics when they wish to amputate a limb from a man's body without his feeling the pain of it. An amusing example of the skilful use of such knowledge, but one at the same time that must provoke our pity, is told of a young man of Narbonne who was taken into slavery by a Thracian pirate. While he was under the influence of a powerful drug he was so neatly castrated that, when he awoke, he was amazed to find himself a totally new man, having been deprived of his virility. Mattioli† also tells of the asses of Etruria which, having eaten hemlock, used to fall into so deep a sleep that they were often carried away for dead; and after a great part of their hide had been taken off, they would at last awake and get up on to their feet and rush back to their stalls braying miserably. Many such drugs are known and their use recommended by chemists; such as darnel, nightshade, the rush commonly called *Euripice*,‡ mandragora, castor, poppy-seed, and, as Ovid says in the *Metamorphoses*, XI (606-7):

Herbs innumerable, from whose milky  
juice  
Night gathers softest sleep.

† "Mattioli." Pietro Andrea Mattioli, the celebrated Italian physician and naturalist, was born at Siena in 1500 and died at Trent in 1577. He was the chief physician to the Emperor Maximilian II. His Commentaries upon the writings of the older doctors are especially esteemed.

‡ "Euripice." Pliny, "Historia Naturalis," LXXI (ed. Brotier, 1769): "Inuenio etiamnum unum iunci genus quod euripicen uocant. Huius semine somnum allici, sed modum seruandum, ne sopor fiat."



Now if a deep and lasting sleep can be caused by the mere natural qualities and virtue of substances provided for that purpose, what, I ask, will not the Demons with their arts and contrivances be able to effect? For not only have they a perfect knowledge of the secret and hidden properties of natural things, but they can also, with the will of God, effect their purposes without the external help of anything at all. For certainly I think that there can have been no other cause of the many years' sleep (if indeed the accounts are true) of Epimenides the Cretan and many others, recounted by Pausanias and Eudemus and Simplicius; for such sleep could never naturally have lasted so long. As Aristotle says (*De somno et uigil.*), in the case of a substance naturally endowed with some property or virtue, when the normal period of efficacy for that property has been exceeded it is impossible for that substance to continue to exercise its effect. Therefore it follows that some of the examples which have been known must derive their cause from some higher and more potent source, and that they are altogether different from cases that are brought about by purely natural means.

The amulets covered with unknown characters (to use the words of Apuleius), worn by criminals to ensure their silence under torture, cannot derive their numbing virtues from nature; for they induce a state of torpor only at a time when, by reason of intense pain, sleep is the last thing to be expected. And they are generally found written upon tiny pieces of parchment, and may be worn at any other time without bringing the very least desire or disposition to sleep. Yet jurists of no mean repute have held that these charms enable a prisoner to laugh at torture, and often hinder the judges from extracting the truth. In the trial held not long since by the magistrates of Schlettstadt of the assassins in Germany of Christiana, the Most Serene Queen of the

Danes, there was one of the murderers, named Benigno, who could easily have escaped punishment; for he was abroad when he was inquired for, and might have saved himself by flight. But, relying upon one of these amulets \* given to him by a market stroller, he voluntarily offered himself for trial nor did his confidence prove groundless; for all the instruments of torture were worn out before the man himself felt any effect from them, and so he was unbound quite unhurt, and without having confessed. But as he was on the point of being discharged from prison, he found himself unable to bear any longer the load of his guilt, and of his own accord confessed his crime and finally paid the penalty with his life.

Here it may be argued that this is less surprising in the case of one who wishes and strenuously exerts himself to maintain silence; since the power which, with God's permission, Satan exercises over a man is never so strong as when it is used with the full consent and approbation of the man himself; but that we ought not to think that men can be rendered thus comatose against their own will; for in that case the whole human race would be equally subject to such influence. To this I answer that there is little or no difference between negligence, or sufferance of a thing, and consent to it, since such negligence gives the enemy every chance of assault and attack. For he who neglects to set the necessary garrison and watch when an enemy is threatening his city, does in effect the same as he who knowingly and intentionally betrays his city; and in such a case the enemy may say that he has rightfully taken possession; just as by the law of usucaption it is

\* "Amulets." Upon this point Guazzo should be consulted, "*Compendium Maleficarum*," I, xv: "Whether the Devil can Make Men Insensible to Torture." See the translation, John Rodker, 1929, with my note upon the passage, p. 55.

not held that a man has taken forcible possession of anything that had no apparent owner before. Therefore they bring that misfortune upon themselves, who give themselves to sleep without having first prayed and besought Almighty God for His help; since, as has just been said, that is their safest shield and protection against all the wiles of the Prince of Darkness. But the minds of men who are about to sleep too often wander into evil imaginings, like the Harlot of Jerusalem (to quote S. Jerome), who turns aside for every passer-by (*Ad Rusticum Monachum, Ex Esaiæ, cap. 57*).



### CHAPTER V

*That the much-talked-of Examples of Metamorphosis, both in Ancient and Recent Times, were true in Appearance only, but not in Fact; for the Eyes are deceived by the Glamorous Art of the Demons which cause such Appearances. And although these False Appearances are accompanied by Actions which are found to be perfectly Genuine, this does not prove the Truth of such Metamorphoses; for it is agreed that such Actions are performed by the Demons which control the whole Matter; they being by Nature able very quickly to bring their Designs to Effect.*

IT is not my intention here to bring the Ass of Apuleius again on to the stage, or to adduce fresh examples to support the old tales of the poets of men being changed into beasts; but only to bring forward such instances as are attested by the evidence of many witnesses and are proved by actual experience. The witches of Dieuze, Vergaville, and Forbach, and nearly all who have hitherto been tried for this crime in the kingdom of Austria, and whose confessions have come into my hands, have maintained that they changed themselves from men into

cats \* as often as they wished to enter another man's house secretly in order to plant their poison there at night. These statements are borne out and substantiated by the evidence of many who have reported that they have been attacked by witches in such shape; and the evidence has tallied in all respects with regard to the fact itself, the place, the persons, the time, and every circumstance and detail which could be required to establish complete proof. The case of Barbeline Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587) is quite recent. She confessed that she had transmuted herself into a cat, so that in that shape she might the more easily enter, and the more safely prowl about the house of Joannes Ludovicus: and that when she had done this, she found his two-year-old child and killed it by sprinkling over it a poison powder which she was carrying in her paw.

Whenever (as so easily happens among neighbours and fellows) Petrone of Armentières (Dalheim, 1581), of whom I spoke a little while ago, was moved with hatred or envy against the herdsmen of neighbouring flocks, he used to utter certain words by which he was changed into a wolf; and being, in such disguise, safe from all suspicion of ill doing, he would then fall upon and rend in pieces every beast of the herd that he could find. Joannes Malrisius acknowledged that he had done the same thing when he was keeping the flocks at Sulz-Bad across the woods. As Vergil says in his eighth Eclogue:

Moeris I often saw changed to a wolf  
And prowling in the woods.

\* "Cats." Bartolomeo Spina has as the rubric of Cap. XIX of his "*Quaestio de Strigibus*": "*Experientiae apparentis conuersionis strigum in catos.*" He writes: "*Comprobatur etiā id, quod assumptum est, in praedicta ratione de apparentia strigum in formam brutorū, et praecipue catorum, ut ipsae quoque striges fatentur, per testes fidelissimos de visu, quātum ratione humana iudicare potest.*" See also Boguet, "*An Examen of Witches*," XLVII.

And not long ago the Dolonais \* witnessed the public execution of two werewolves who had been condemned to death by their Supreme Court.

To this class belongs the story which I heard myself from the Illustrious Count Paul à Salm, Prefect of the Sacred Chamber in the realm of Lorraine. I was expressing to him my doubts as to whether it was an illusion when a man appeared to take the form of a beast, or whether there was really any truth in such things; when he told me the following story. He held a signiory at Pettelange, where, following their ancient custom, the inhabitants used to pay a yearly tribute of free service to him and his family. One year they had thus brought their cart-loads of fuelling, and were receiving a gift of food in return, when (as often happens) a fight began in the castle hall among the dogs that had come with them; and one bitch hid itself in an oven for heating the baths. As the rest of the dogs kept up a violent barking at this one, one of the men looked in the oven and, seeing that the bitch was far more hideous to look at than all the others, began to suspect the truth (for that district is reported to be infested with witches), and gave it a deep wound in the face with a weapon that he was wearing. Upon this the bitch at once rushed out at the door, or at any rate she was no more seen there. Shortly afterwards a rumour spread all over the town that there was an old woman lying in bed with a wound, and that it was not known where she received it. Everyone then began to suspect the truth, namely, that she was that rabid bitch which had been wounded in the castle hall; and this, added to her former

evil reputation, caused her to be taken and thrown into prison. Finally, on being minutely questioned, she freely confessed all as it has here been told, at the same time acknowledging many other acts of witchcraft.

Here I should relate also what I heard from a credible source to have happened not long ago in Hither Burgundy: how a certain hostess came among her guests at supper in the form of a cat and spitefully attacked them; and when one of them cut off one of her paws, she was found the next day to have a hand missing. But because my informant told me this only in passing and I cannot fully verify the facts, I have thought good to say no more about it. But one more instance I will give, which I heard from the renowned Lady Diana of Dommartin, the wife of the illustrious Prince Charles Philippe Croy, Marquis of Haurech, my very kind patron, to whose good graces I owe such advancements in fortune as I have enjoyed.

She told me that there was not long ago in Thiecourt, a village on their lands, a woman addicted to witchcraft whom the Demon had endowed with this power of assuming different shapes. She had contracted an immoderate hatred of a shepherd of that village, and, wishing by any means to procure his heavy punishment, sprang in the form of a wolf upon his sheep as they were grazing. But he ran up and threw an axe at her and wounded her in the thigh, so that she was disabled and was forced to take refuge behind the nearest bush, where she was found by the pursuing shepherd, binding her wound with strips torn from her clothing to stanch the blood which was flowing freely. On this evidence she was taken up, confessed everything as I have related it, and paid the penalty of her crimes in the fire.

The common opinion about such monstrous transformations is no new thing; for it was the belief of the

\* "Dolonais." Boguet, "An Examen of Witches," XLVII, records that in 1521 were executed Michael Udon of Plane, Philibert Montot, and Gros Pierre, who confessed that they had changed themselves into wolves, and in that form killed and eaten several people. In 1573 Gilles Garnier was burned alive at Dôle for the abominable crime of lycanthropy.



ancients from time immemorial, as is proved by more than one reference in their written works. Pliny (VIII, 22) tells us that. Euanthes, an author of great reputation, quotes from the *Annals of Arcadia* to the effect that there was a family of the tribe of Anthaeus whose destiny it was that each year one of them must be chosen by lot and led to a pool over which, having undressed, he must swim; and then he was immediately changed from a man into a beast. And if, after nine years, he had not in the meanwhile tasted human blood, he might again assume his former shape. Herodotus (*Melpomene*) and Solinus (*Polyhist.* Cap. 20) tell that the Neuri, who live by the Dnieper, are once every year changed into wolves for a few days, and after the allotted period regain their former appearance. And Agrippas, the author of the *Olympionica*, left record that one Demaenetus was changed into a wolf because he had tasted the entrails of a child whom the Arcadians had sacrificed to Jupiter *Lycaeus*. The same thing happened, as Pausanias tells, to Lycaon the son of Pelasgus, when he sprinkled the altar of Jupiter *Lycaeus* with the blood of his slaughtered son.

Let no one ascribe such stories to the ignorance of heathen blindness, on the ground that they refer only to those times when men lived without the light of the Christian truth. For it is said (*Sigibert. in chron. Luith.* III, 8) that Bajanus, the son of Symeon who was Prince of Bulgaria, could by his evil spells change himself whenever he wished into a wolf or any other beast. And Torquemada in his *Hexameron*, VI, relates that when a certain Russian chieftain heard that there was in his Principality a man who could assume any shape he pleased, he caused the man to be brought before him in chains, and ordered him immediately to give a sample of his skill. The man answered that he would willingly do so if he might retire into the next room by himself for a little. This was granted him; and he at once

came out in the natural form of a wolf, but still in his chains, to the great wonder of all who beheld him; but two very fierce dogs which the Prince had concealed for that purpose, fell upon the wretched man and tore him in pieces; nor was he helped at all by his wolfish body, which at all other times had stood him in good stead.

I need not dilate upon Homer's account of the companions of Ulysses, nor the story of the Golden Ass told by Lucian and Apuleius, nor the many metamorphoses later fabled at great length by Ovid. For anyone who cares to consider rightly of this matter, even if he relies solely upon his natural intelligence and power of reasoning, must allow that once anything is formed in its own shape and appearance it cannot be changed except by its death; and that there can be no reciprocation or interchange of bodily forms. And if he will raise his thoughts to the plane of Christian knowledge, as every man should, not even the most diffident will hesitate to affirm that it is not in the power of the Demon to effect any such matter, seeing that, of himself, he has no power to pluck even a single hair from the head of a man. For what madness it is to believe that anything which has been formed and created can destroy and overturn as it pleases the most excellent work of Him who created it; or that a soul endowed with reason can, even for a moment, dwell or reside in a body which is altogether unadapted to the use of reason. For certainly, says Cicero, the human body is by nature adapted and fitted for the reasoning human soul. It may be argued that such transformations are permitted by Him who turns even men's misfortunes to a good purpose. I grant this last; but what benefit could accrue to anyone from such a transmutation? Or who ever read of such a thing in any sacred history? It is true that Nebuchadnezzar was at one time reduced to the condition of the lower animals because he had

affected divine honours; but he never changed his bodily appearance. Only the wrath of Heaven constrained him for some years to feed and be housed with the beasts, and to grow his hair and nails after the manner of beasts for a protection and a defence.

It is, therefore, absurd and incredible that anyone can truly be changed from a man into a wolf or any other animal. Yet there must be some foundation for the opinion so obstinately held by so many: the countless stories that are circulated about such happenings cannot be entirely without warrant. Nearly all who have deeply examined this whole question are convinced that such transformations are magical portents and glammers, which have the form but not the reality of their appearances; and that they can be caused in two ways.

The Demon can so confuse the imagination of a man that he believes himself to be changed; and then the man behaves and conducts himself not as a man, but as that beast which he fancies himself to be. Aulus Gellius, XI, 5, notes that this fact was formerly remarked by the Pyrrhonists and Academics; and it is well known to physicians that sufferers from a high fever are often so affected in their senses that they mistake the hallucinations of their fancy for the truth. So it may have been with the man who is said to have firmly believed that he had been changed into an earthen pitcher, and would not allow anyone to come near him for fear lest they should knock against him and break him; and he kept complaining because the servants did not set him up on a high shelf where he would be less liable to damage, but carelessly left him lying about on a bed. There was another man who thought that he had in his belly a jingling bridle and other pieces of iron; and this ridiculous notion could not be got out of his mind until a shrewd physician placed some bridles in the pan into which he was easing his belly, so that he thought

that he had expelled them in that way. So fruitful is the imagination, once it becomes diseased, of absurd and unheard-of ideas; and for this reason Plato did not hesitate to call it the Mistress of Phantoms; Aristotle, the Treasury of Images; and another philosopher, the Craft-shop of Portents.

Secondly, these illusions can be caused extrinsically, when the Demon causes an actual object to assume the apparent shape which suits his purpose at the time, and so deludes a man's senses into the belief that an object has been changed into a different form. Thus, when Homer and Vergil write of a man being taken out of the battle when on the point of defeat, or of one coming into battle to help those in difficulty, they describe such a man as having taken the appearance and likeness of the Gods, in whose hands these matters lie, so that he might not be recognized even by those who were his daily friends and companions. This is not unlike the account given by S. Vincent \* of Beauvais in his *Speculum majus*, Lib. XVIII, of a woman who, at the request of a Jew because she would not lend herself to his pleasure, a witch so apparently changed into a mare that she seemed to be such not only to everyone else but even to her husband; and only S. Macharius, since he was a man of the rarest sanctity, was not deceived by that illusion, and knew her throughout for the woman that she really was.

I think that the following example

\* "S. Vincent." Even the years of the birth and death of this great writer are uncertain, the dates most frequently assigned being 1190 and 1264 respectively. It is thought that Vincent joined the Dominicans in Paris shortly after 1218, and thus he passed his life in the monastery at Beauvais, where he was occupied with his huge work, the general title of which is "*Speculum Majus*." This contains no less than eighty books, divided into 9885 chapters, and is a vast encyclopædia which may be said to embrace the whole field of knowledge of his day.

of a false occultation may fitly be quoted here. An old man, the porter of the Fortress of Bassompierre, had married a young wife, but continued to maintain connubial relations with a woman who had been his mistress before his marriage. His wife was indignant at the presence of this adulteress, who was not to be compared with her for youth or comeliness, and (as is usually the case) went and told her trouble to a neighbouring woman and asked her to advise her what to do. Her neighbour (whose name was Lahire) told her to be of good cheer, for she had ready a remedy for that misfortune; and she gave her a herb plucked from her garden and said that if she put the juice of it in her husband's food, he would immediately forget his other love. So she seasoned his next meal with this juice; and at first his head grew very heavy, and then he sank into a profound sleep, on at last awaking from which he found, not without shame, that his whole masculinity had been taken from him. Being unable to conceal the fact any longer, he told his wife of his misfortune; and she, seeing that she had been deceived by her own imprudence and thoughtlessness, and that in begrudging the part to another she had herself lost the whole, told her husband how it had all happened; begging him to forgive her, since she had acted out of her great love for him. The husband readily pardoned her, since he knew that he had brought the misfortune upon himself by his lecherous lasciviousness: and laid the whole matter before the Lord of the place, François de Bassompierre (whose son is famous as a supporter of the Catholic Party in the present upheavals in France). He, considering it to be his business to take care for the health of one of his servants, and to punish the witch in exemplary fashion for so shameful a crime, had that woman brought before him, and so terrified her by his threats that he compelled her to restore to the man that of which she had

by her evil arts seemingly robbed him. This she did by giving him another herb; and so, being convicted by her own act, she was cast into prison and soon afterwards met the fate she deserved in the flames. It is perfectly clear, then, that there was no actual loss of the man's generative organs; but that a false glamour was drawn over the eyes of those who imagined them to have disappeared. For how should it be more possible for that member to grow again once it had been cut off than for the head or any other limb to be renewed after it had been amputated from the body?

But there is another far stronger argument which might appear to prove the actuality of these transformations. It is not only the external physical shape that appears to be changed; the witch is also endowed with all the natural qualities and powers of the animal into which she is seemingly changed. For she acquires fleetness of foot; bodily strength; ravenous ferocity; the lust of howling; the faculty of breaking into places, and of silent movement; and other such animal characteristics, which are far beyond human strength or ability. For it is a matter of daily experience that Satan does actually so empower them. Thus they easily kill even the biggest cattle in the fields, and even devour their raw flesh, when they descend upon them as swiftly as any wolf or other ferocious beast; and they enter locked houses at night like cats; and in every way imitate the nature and habits of the animals whose shape and appearance they assume. Now this cannot be explained away as a mere glamour or prestige by which our senses are deceived in the manner already set forth; for they leave behind them concrete traces of their activities. For example, they are sometimes caught in the very act; and failing that, there is the evidence of their flight, pursuit and wounding, and of the loss and damage which they have inflicted; and, moreover, they



all acknowledge, often without compulsion, that they have actually done these things.

It must, then, be admitted that these things are actually what they appear to be; but that they are done through the agency of the Demon, who, by virtue of his immense preternatural powers, makes their accomplishment possible. (For it is written in Job that upon earth there is not his like.) Thus we must believe that it was by the strength of Satan that the demoniac was able easily to burst the chains and fetters with which he was bound (*S. Luke viii*); for it is needless to say that he could not have done this of his own human strength. I shall not dwell upon the stories told of the nuns of Quesnoy by Christianus Massaeus (*Chronicon mundi*, Lib. 20), how with the Demon's help they climbed the tallest trees in the shape of cats, and hung marvellously from the topmost branches; and perfectly imitated the cries of any sort of animal, and easily accomplished many other things of a most astounding nature.

We will admit, therefore, that witches so well imitate the faculties, powers and actions of the beasts whose appearance they assume that they differ but little from actuality; but that they are in very truth actual will not easily be believed by anyone who will ponder upon the dignity and excellence of man; how he was created in God's own image, as a marvellous and transcendent type of the whole worldly creation, and has therefore been called a *microcosm*. For God made him a little lower than the angels, and put all things in subjection under his feet; and through baptism he wins atonement and absolution, and at last his body will be raised from the dead unto unchanging eternity. Who can think that a soul so largely and variously blessed can be put to such ludicrous humiliation as to be transferred into the carcase and entrails of the baser animals, and be there hid as in a sepulchre? Indeed I think that such

a belief cannot be consistent with true religion; for the Council of Aquileia pronounced that it was a damnable heresy to hold that anything could be changed from that shape with which it was at first endowed by God the Father of all things. S. Augustine (*Ciu. Dei*, XVIII, and *De Trin.* III) also gravely and severely reproves those who believe that a man may, by the arts and might of the Devil, be transmuted into the body of a beast; for the matter of things visible is under the control of God alone, and not of the fallen Angels.

Not even the Pagans could, for the most part, stomach such a belief. For Pliny, the author of so many incredible stories, shows himself surprisingly and firmly sceptical on this point, where he says in his *Natural History* (VIII, 22): "Either we must refuse to believe that men can be turned into wolves and back again, or else we must swallow every fabulous tale that has ever been told." And when Olaus Magnus (*Hist. de gentibus Septentr.* XVIII, 14) aggressively undertook the championship of this actual lycanthropy and sought everywhere for examples to prove his case, he imprudently adduced, among others, the two following examples, which rather refute and destroy his own argument:—Speaking of wer-wolves (for I will change none of his words), he said: "They entered a beer cellar, and there drank out some casks of beer and mead, and piled the empty casks on top of each other in the middle of the cellar." And a little later: "Dividing Lithuania, Smazait and Curland there is a wall left standing from a ruined castle; and at a certain time of the year some thousands of them meet here and try their agility in leaping over it; and if any of them cannot do this (as is the case with the fat ones) they are beaten with the lash by their leaders." What is there in these examples that is not more proper to men than to wolves? To go down into a cellar to draw the beer and drink it, and to place the empty casks

one on the other; to meet together in thousands and hold an athletic contest, with a heavy penalty for those who failed: not to be able to rid themselves of an obesity developed before they were changed into wolves! All this might just as well be an account of men drinking, playing and contending among themselves, but in a strange and false bodily appearance. And, as we have said, such an illusion of the eyes can easily be caused by spells and incantations, while in truth everything is exactly as it was before.



#### CHAPTER VI

*That Satan often compels his Subjects to be accessory to his Dark Deeds; and for that Purpose uses many Things which are not of themselves Venomous or Poisonous, but merely Rotten and Stinking; and why he does this.*

THE following aspect of witchcraft is rare and, so far as I know, has not hitherto been remarked. Fuxen Eugel at Bulligny, in April 1586, and Catharina Haffner at Vergaville, in Sept. 1586, said that they had often been deputed by the Demon to the following task: When they entered another man's house to poison him, they had (to use their own words as much as possible) to seize and hold him down by the neck and belly and, as soon as they were ready, to thrust well into his mouth a piece of decayed flesh from some dead beast; and this would immediately kill him, just as if it were some very deadly poison. We may learn from this that Satan always in some manner disguises his evil designs for our destruction. For who does not know that he has no need of human help to effect his purposes? Or who ever heard that a piece of dead flesh can be so poisonous as to be the necessary and inevitable cause of death? The explanation of his motive, then,

is that by making the witch a participant in the work he makes her an accessory to the crime. And since there must be some tangible instrument which can be attested by the eyes, he uses such things as are agreeable to his filthy and unclean nature; such as the decomposed fragments of a dead body. But this we have treated elsewhere in greater detail.



#### CHAPTER VII

*Examples of the Various Ills that Witches secretly bring upon Men, showing how greatly their Spells and Snares are to be feared.*

WE have already shown that not only do the evil spirits make war upon men on their own account, but they take great pains to ensure that their disciples shall be in every way equipped and instructed to encompass men's destruction. And because witches are often hampered in their evil work by the fear of detection, or by the difficulty and magnitude of their undertaking, or by not knowing how to set about it, or by ignorance of the spells necessary to procure a secret disaster; therefore the Demons are always ready to their call, and do not cease to advise and encourage them, to suggest the means to be employed, and if necessary to offer their own help as partners, accomplices or ministers of their crimes and murders.

Jana Ulderique at Lanfracourt, May 1588, was infuriated against Jean Canard because he had rather gruffly refused to pay her what she asked for having helped him to keep watch over the communal cattle; and something had to be done to make him suffer in his turn, lest he should go unpunished. (For it is the greatest torture to a witch to pass over even the smallest insult.) Her only difficulty was to know how to

avoid incurring suspicion if any harm befell Canard in consequence of their quarrel; for it was a saying all over the township that, if anyone wanted to keep himself and his possessions safe and whole, he must avoid being cursed by Ulderique. The Demon then found her a way by which no suspicion could possibly attach to her; for with his help she entered the locked house of Canard by the window, and there so skilfully suffocated his baby as it was sleeping in its cradle that it might easily be thought to have died of convulsions. But the wretched parents were not deceived as to the cause of their loss; for when some time later Ulderique was on trial for witchcraft, they stated with the utmost confidence in their evidence that she was the author of that crime; and so far from denying this accusation, she gave the clearest and most detailed confirmation in her account of every point of the crime.

Barbeline Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587) plotted with her Demon to do some harm to Claude Mammert, who had done nothing whatever to hurt her. (For it often makes no difference to them whether or not their victims have done anything to merit revenge, as we have fully shown from the account of Sebastienne Picard.) They agreed to do their work by night, when they would be less likely to be caught in the act than by daytime; and so they went to his bed as he was lying asleep with his wife. By the bed, wrapped in swaddling cloths, was a baby, which they took from its cradle, intending to drown it in the river which flowed near by. But the mother was aroused by the child's crying, and began groping in the dark with her hands about the cradle, to see if it had buried itself in the blankets, or if the swaddling cloths had worked loose and it was choking itself with them, as had happened to it more than once before. Finding the cradle empty, she jumped out of bed to look for the child. Being thus balked and thwarted, the beldame

witch could do no more, before she flew up through the chimney with her Demon, than hide the child in the framework of the bed, so that the eagerly searching mother should not find it so soon as she wished to; for this was all that she could do as she departed, when she was unable to inflict any heavier loss upon the mother. Mammert and his wife related this experience when they were heard in evidence against Alexée Belheure; but it proved that they were wrong in suspecting her of the crime. For not long afterwards Barbeline, being suspected on the strongest evidence of witchcraft, was taken up and confessed that she, and not Belheure, was guilty of that deed.

She was also guilty of the following crimes against Johann Ludovic, whom, she said, she hated for many reasons. First, as he was crossing a river on his way to a mill, with the help of her Demon she shook a large sack of wheat from his cart; and then sprinkled over his horses some poison powder which her Little Master had given her, so that two of them died at once and the rest lingered on for many days in a comatose state. Secondly, and not long afterwards, in the illusory form of a cat she entered his house at night and with the same powder killed his two-year-old son. Lastly, she placed a poisoned pear on the road which he would take to go to Gerbeville, as if it had fallen from some wayfarer's bag. He rashly picked it up and tasted it, whereupon he became so seriously ill that he could hardly drag his feet home for the pain. Not only had the Demon foretold all these things just as they happened, but it was by his advice that she had placed the pear on the road.

Catharine Ruffa at Ville-sur-Moselle, June 1587, acknowledged that she used to enter other people's houses at night by the chimney, in order to lay their babies face-downwards on the pillow and so suffocate them; but that she always contrived to leave some evidence which would



cause the husband to blame the wife for such a misfortune, and so lead to endless strife between them. For the Demon always does his utmost to sow seeds of dissension and quarrelling between those who are bound together by ties of love or kinship.

Lolla Gelaea at Dieuze, Sept. 1587, aroused against herself the ill-will and hatred of Catharina of Metingow, who eagerly wished to vent her spite on her, but could not think how to do so without bringing suspicion upon herself; for she knew that Lolla was on her guard against her. But the Demon found a safe way for her, and told her to bring some live coals home with them in their buckets when she and Lolla came in the next day as usual from the salt kilns at Dieuze (which are the most famous in all Lorraine); for he would be at hand and would upset Lolla's bucket with a gust of wind, upon which she must at once breathe upon her face; and this would cause her to give premature birth to her child with the greatest agony. And it happened as he had said. For at the signal of her bucket being upset by the Demon, Catharina blew her foul breath upon Lolla, who at once was attacked by the most violent labour pains and only with the greatest difficulty reached home in time.

Jana Gransaint at Condé, July 1582, was sitting by her lamp late one night solely occupied in pondering upon some means of revenging herself upon Barbara Gratirosa, from whom she had suffered some injury. At once the Demon came to her in the form of a cat and told her to pound a snail's shell to powder and dust Barbara's clothes with it. This plan she adopted, and watched for a chance to put it into effect. And she did not have to wait long; for she found Barbara in a remote stable carrying straw into the ox stalls, and sprinkled the powder over her and the oxen in the stable; and this killed them all at once. She afterwards used the powder with less deadly effect upon the daughter of Antoine

le Bossu; for although she sprinkled it liberally upon her, it only caused a slight weakness of her limbs; and when a few days later she again sprinkled her with the intention of healing her, she at once recovered from that weakness.

Here it should be noted in passing that the drugs which they use in this manner have in themselves no inherent power either to kill or to heal. For the same thing cannot be effective in two such contrary directions. It is all due to the potency of the secret machinations and contrivances of the Demon; and it is enough for him if the witches do but set their hands to the work and make themselves partners and accomplices in the crime. In this reference we may quote the statement of Pliny (II, 103), that there was in Dodona a spring into which if you plunged a burning torch it was extinguished, but by the same process an extinguished torch was ignited. For no one can doubt that this prodigy was the work of the Demon who uttered his oracles from that place; nor would any one attempt to reconcile it with natural causes. In the same way Plutarch (*Numbruta animalia ratione utantur*) tells of the sorceress Circe that with the selfsame wand she took away and restored men's reason; and changed men into beasts, and again restored them to themselves. Petrus de Abano \* also tells us in his

\* "Abano." Pietro d'Apone (or d'Abano) was born about 1246 in the village the name of which he bears, and which is situate at no great distance from Padua. A pupil of the Arabian physicians, he practised in Paris with such great success that he soon became exceeding rich, and won great renown as a philosopher, mathematician and astrologer of the first rank. Being shrewdly suspect of sorcery, a charge coloured by his Averroistic lectures at the University of Padua, he fell under the cognizance of the Holy Office, but died in 1316 before the termination of his trial. The "Conciliator," written in 1303, attained extraordinary fame, and the edition of 1494, Venice, speaks of three or four earlier printed editions, whilst it was issued at least as late as 1596. The book was placed on the Lisbon Index of 1634, but it has

*Conciliator Differentium*, 765, that he saw a conjurer who, by muttering certain words in its ear, caused a bull to fall to the ground as if dead; and by repeating the same words made it come to life again and rise up on its feet. But let us resume the tale of our examples.

Alexée Belheure (Blainville, Jan. 1587) was always quarrelling with her husband, as usually happens in a house suffering from poverty and daily want; and her hatred of him reached such a pitch that it was only the difficulty of injuring him, not her will to do so, that restrained her. The Demon said that he would do it for her if she thought he was worth her beseeching; whereupon she begged him in the most abject terms and he undertook the work. It chanced that on that day, which was Christmas Eve, the wretched husband had gone to the neighbouring town to purchase such things as a happy household usually makes merry with at that time, and was returning late at night. On his way the Demon violently seized him and beat him and threw him half dead into the pit of Donalibaria (for such was the name of the place), and flying back to his good wife told her what he had done. On hearing this she at once set out, to show how anxious and worried she was about his return; but chiefly that she might see with her own eyes the calamity and misfortune which she had so long wished to happen to him; and when at last she found him lying on the ground and bewailing his miserable luck, she said: "Why, husband! I was coming to meet you, because I was worried about your being out so late in the country. But why do I find you lying on the ground and moaning like this?" After she had been told what she already knew, she raised him up

*never been included in the Roman or Spanish Indexes. The view taken by Pietro d'Abano of the influence of the stars and his astrological tenets are speculations which are more than dangerous and unorthodox. The "Heptameron seu Elementa Magiæ" deals with the invocation of demons.*

and, giving him what support she could with her shoulder, brought him home, where he died the same night from the unbearable pain of his blows. In the morning she summoned all the neighbours and showed them his naked corpse all black and blue with bruises; and told them that he had fallen among robbers the night before, and had crept home with his last gasp in that state. They all easily believed this; for she was not young enough or comely enough to be suspected of having entertained adulterers.

Jacobeta Equina at Sulz-Bad, Oct. 1585, seeing certain persons whom she hated making their way through a pass, and wishing to harm them in some way, gave immediate utterance to the first wish that occurred to her; namely, that they should so lose their way that they would be unable to find it again. And it fell out as she had asked. For they wandered so far out of their way that, when at last they reached home, they were hardly able to stand for weariness.

See how vulnerable is man's life to the wiles and assaults of Demons! Wherefore men should be advised to keep their thoughts on God, that He may afford them His protection, and give His angels charge over them, and deliver them from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence (*Psalms xci*).

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## CHAPTER VIII

*The Herbs, Powder, Straws, and other such Trash which Witches strew on the Ground are a certain Cause of Death or Illness to those who Walk upon them, provided that it is the Witch's intention and wish to injure them; but those against whom no Evil is contemplated can Walk safe and unharmed over them. And this clearly shows the Cunning and Wile of the Devil in Afflicting and Destroying Men.*

IT has been shown from the definite assertions of witches that they often use the same instruments for procuring

both sickness and healing: that the powder with which they dust the clothes of others is sometimes fatal to them, although the witches themselves may touch it with their hands with impunity; and that the sickness so caused is amenable to almost no cure except such as the witch is willing to provide; and that this cure usually consists in the utterance of one or two words, or a mere hand touch, and often in the application of things which ordinarily have no healing power at all. From all this it is sufficiently clear that there is in the things so used by them no inherent or natural power either of hurting or of healing; but that, whatever prodigious results are effected, it is all done by the Demons through some power of which the source and explanation is not known. For in the examples of such doings we find much that can spring from no probable cause in nature; but that certain substances behave in a manner entirely opposed to that which would normally be expected from their active and passive properties. This will be proved and clearly shown by the following instances.

Odilla Boncourt at Haraucourt, Dec. 1586, said that it was the practice of witches, when they were afraid of being detected in their crime, to scatter a poison powder on the path which they thought would be taken by those whose misfortune they were plotting. And this is borne out by the confession of Rosa Gerardine at Essey, Nov. 1586, that she had brought a fatal sickness upon her comrade Stephanus Obertus by scattering such a powder on his threshold before dawn. Jacobus Agathius at Laach, March 1588, said that the Demon had suggested the same means to him as by far the easiest way to rid himself of the wife of Hilary le Ban. Isabella Bardaea at Epinal, May 1588, and Martha Mergelatia said that they had never failed in such an attempt against anyone; especially if they had acted at the instigation of their Demon.

Françoise Perine at Bains-les-Bains, June 1588, was passing a fruit tree belonging to her neighbour Riberot, and picked up some pears which had fallen from it; but, being caught in the act, was severely thrashed by him. As she brooded on this, wishing by any means to be revenged, it was not long before the Demon showed her a chance of fulfilling her wish by giving her a herb which she must lay on the path by which Riberot always went to his work in the morning. This she did; and when he, not suspecting any trap, walked over the place, he was at once stricken with a sickness of which he shortly died in great agony. Benoît Drigie (Haraucourt, Dec. 1586) said that his Demon had recommended him to put poison upon either the door or the clothes of anyone whom he wished to kill. Barbeline Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587) said that she had used this method against Franz Pfeifer, whose neighbour she had lately become; for she infected with poison powder the gate through which his cattle went to water, and on the next day three of his mares were found lying dead in their stalls. Claude Morèle (Serre, Dec. 1586) did likewise outside the door of Wolfgang of Hadonville his kinsman; and as a result of coming out by that way, his daughter was at once seized with an illness of which she soon died miserably; and a horse fell and broke its leg. With the same spell he vented his spite upon Nicolas Augustin, the Castellan of Serre, with whom he was on terms of bad friendship; but after a few days he was moved to pity at seeing him suffer with so long and heavy a malady; yet he could not bring him any help or the least relief from his sickness, since he was forbidden and prevented by his Demon, although he continually expostulated with him over this matter. Catharina of Metingow at Dieuze, Sept. 1586, bitterly resented the refusal of a certain baker to let her have bread on credit, and begged her Demon to help



her to requite him for this. The Demon at once agreed, eager and diligent as is ever his wont to provide the means of any act of vindictiveness, and gave her some herbs wrapped in paper which he told her to scatter in some place frequently used by the baker and his family. This she did without delay, placing them in the doorway by which he must necessarily come out into the village; and when the baker, and after him his wife and children, had trodden upon them, they were all seized with the same sickness, and did not recover until the witch, moved by pity, obtained permission from the Demon to restore them to health. For this purpose she again took some herbs and hid them under their bed, as she had been instructed; and so they were all healed of their sickness and regained their former health. Catharina Latomia at Haraucourt, Feb. 1587, in the same way put a herb given her by the Demon upon the threshold of the house of Jean Antoine, with the result that, after his wife had come out that way, the milk in her breasts was dried up and, in consequence, the child to whom she was then giving suck died; this being what the witch had chiefly desired to happen.

For just as of all living creatures their lust is chiefly to kill men, so of human creatures witches take an especial delight in the slaughter of infants and those who by virtue of their age are innocent and guiltless. This fact is exemplified in the behaviour of Jacoba Cavallia, that Drigie mentioned above, and Odilla, who, as I remember, had an excessive tax (according to their own computation) imposed upon them by the assessors of the village in which they lived, and wished to be avenged for that injustice by some signal act of retribution. The Demon did not fail to provide them with an apt and convenient means of attaining their wish by scattering their poison as thickly as possible on the grazing grounds of the cattle of that

village; and, to remove their last difficulty, he told them that they could easily prepare the necessary poison by pounding up the first worms that they found until they were reduced to a powder fine enough to sprinkle. When, therefore, they had acted accordingly, within a few days there perished in that village a hundred and fifty head of cattle, as Drigie said, or a hundred and sixty according to Odilla's account; for they were questioned separately, and agreed in everything except the numbers. The truth of their statements was attested by the facts themselves; for at about the time indicated that number of cattle was lost by the villagers.

Notice that the herbs, dust, worms and other such trash scattered about by witches do not only cause sickness or death, against which defensive measures can be taken when they are conveyed by contagion as in the case of the breathing or touching of plague-infested matters; but they also break or weaken limbs, and diminish, draw off and dry up the milk in the breasts. It is obvious that such effects can only proceed from some secret co-operation of the Demon. This conviction is strengthened by the fact that these matters are harmful only to those against whom they are intentionally directed; whilst everyone else can walk over them and tread upon them safely and without experiencing any hurt. This is proved beyond doubt by the following performance of Alexée Drigie (Haraucourt, Nov. 1586).

Her Demon gave her a handful of fern to scatter on the path most frequently used by the daughter of a shepherd named Claude, of whom she was jealous, so that she might suddenly die. But her one fear was lest this calamity should befall others also who went that way, whom she had no wish to injure. The Demon, however, told her to be at ease on that score, since the poison would affect no one except her for whom it was intended;

and it happened just as he had said. For of all those who passed by that way, only that shepherd's daughter met her death because of it. Not long afterwards the same witch miserably afflicted the health of Humbert the Castellan by rubbing his couch with the same powder; but the charm was deadly to him alone; for many others, both before and after him, had sat on that couch.

Two more examples may aptly be told here. One of these concerns Jeanne Poirelle (Château-Salins, April 1582), one of whose poisoned cakes the whole of a neighbour's family ate, but only that one perished whom she had intended to kill. The other concerns Hubertula of Grand-Buxières-sous-Amance, April 1589, who had been treated with gross unfairness by a fellow-townsmen named N., and thought that she would be abundantly avenged upon him if she could poison the five cows upon the produce of which he and his family depended. But there was danger of being caught in the act if she did this by touching each of them with a poisoned wand, which was the method she used in her other poisonings. To relieve her of this fear, therefore, her Little Master told her to go before dawn to the pastures to which most of the cattle were usually driven, and scatter about a poison powder which he gave her. Yet she still hesitated, being afraid lest the poison would kill the whole herd, which she wished to spare except for the cows of that N. who was the only one she wanted to inflict such a loss upon. But the Demon assured her that only his five cows would be harmed; and so it proved; for only they of all the herd died or contracted any sickness.

Away with them, then, away with all who say that the talk of a pact between witches and Demons is mere nonsense; for the facts themselves give them the lie, and are attested and proved by the legitimate complaints of many men. But some are so obstinate as to be

unable to perceive this; they are such double fools that no misfortune can bring them wisdom.



## CHAPTER IX

*For what Reason it is that the Devil often demands the Witches' Consent when he is Plotting and contriving Evil against anyone: with several Examples to show that such is his Usual Practice.*

THAT through the agency of the Devil men are stricken with strange sicknesses of which physicians cannot find the cause is clearly enough shown in the story of Job, as well as by what S. Luke (xiii, 11) tells of the woman whom a spirit of infirmity had so bound for eighteen years that, through the contraction of her sinews, her whole body was bowed down. But it has always been a very vexed question why the Devil should so often require the consent of his disciples before he undertakes his evil work, as if his powers would not otherwise be equal to it. Many think that the reason for this is that, if he were able to do all that he wished, the whole human race, of which he has always been the implacable enemy, would long ago have perished; and that, therefore, as soon as he was cast forth from Heaven, God took from him all power to do ill at his own will, so that he could not harm mankind except through the agency of men. Now although a good case could be made out for this view, there is also much to be said for the following opinion:—That Satan, as the executioner and minister of God's wrath, nearly always acts independently in bringing destruction upon men; and that he purposely demands the consent that we are discussing in order that he may make his disciples partners and accomplices in his crimes, and at the same time earn their gratitude by procuring for them the acts of vengeance which they so ardently

desire; and by this means also he can blazon and display his power in accomplishing that which surpasses all human strength; and finally, he diverts all suspicion from the witches by doing their work in their absence, and without their having even lifted a finger to help him. The following records will make the question of this consent quite clear.

Beatrice Bayona (Gerbeville, Aug. 1585) wished to be revenged upon Petrone Maxent, who had done her some great injury; and at last the Demon to whom she owed allegiance undertook to accomplish this, provided that she would give her consent. She did not hesitate to say that that was what she wished; and at once the Demon attacked and killed the infant son of Petrone; and on the next day he announced the deed to her, glorying in it as in a task well done, insolently adding that the mother was taking her son's death very impatiently, but that not even her great grief could restore him to life. By means of nothing more than a curse Jana Gallaea at Mirecourt, Dec. 1583, attacked the health of Catharina Simonette, as she had before done to many others; having found out by long experience that the bare expression of her wish was enough to cause injury, in accordance with the pact she had formed with her Demon. In the same way Barbeline Rayel (Blainville, Jan. 1587) said that often she had only to express a wish for her Little Master to put it into effect; and that not only was he always exceedingly prompt to execute such wishes, but he was also most careful in reporting their accomplishment to her. For hardly had she begun to curse a certain neighbour of hers, when the Demon appeared to her in the shape of a hideous dog and told her that all had already been done as she had wished. Rosa Gerardine (Essay, Nov. 1586), Anna Drigie (Haraucourt, Nov. 1586), Jacotius Jacotinus (Mirecourt, Oct. 1586), Jacob Fischer and his wife Colette (Gerbeville, May 1586), and

many other witches asserted that without doubt nearly everyone whom they cursed wasted away.

Any crime that the witches themselves dare not undertake they secretly accomplish through their Demons against those who have incurred their hatred. Nicole Morèle (Serre, Jan. 1587) confessed that at her request the Demon had sprinkled a black powder over the horses of Nicolas Dominique as he was driving them to a near-by spring, and that they were seized with the gravest sickness and soon afterwards died in great misery. She said further that when she had poisoned the cook of the Lord of the village in which she lived so that he only just escaped death, she had first been most severely beaten by her Demon, and was then compelled to put the matter in his hands so that he might do the cook an even greater injury, and even kill him if he wished. When she had agreed to this, he flew in a moment to his kitchen and, without anyone seeing him, poured a deadly powder into a potion which the cook happened then to be mixing in a mortar as a cure for his sickness; owing to which venomous confection he very soon departed from the living. The Lord himself vouched for the truth of this to me, since he had been present at the time and had carefully observed everything. In very much the same way Martha Margelatia (Epinal, May 1588), without being herself present but through the agency of her Demon, shook a fatal dust over Nicolas the cartwright because he had heaped up a pile of wood near her fields and so caused her some inconvenience. Again, Jaquelina Xalueta (Grand-Buxières-sous-Amance, April 1588) said that it had always been quite enough for her, as often as she desired the death of either a man or a beast, to nod to her Demon that such was her wish, and it was done.

This was confirmed by the following account given by her fellow-countrywoman Hubertula when she was tried (Feb. 1589) for witchcraft in the next



year:—"We had come back from the fields very tired from the work which one Leonard had hired us to do, and were eagerly looking forward to some supper being brought to us. All at once his daughter picked me out and angrily began to scold me for my laziness, and ordered me, while I was waiting, to pour the lye over some linen that was piled up there to be washed. I was indignant at being given this extra work, and uttered a curse against her; and my Little Master at once came and promised that he would soon pay her for her pertness if I bade him. And, having my ready consent, he did so. For on the next day the girl came running in a fright to her mother as she was superintending the work in the fields, and told her that her baby brother who had been left in her care had, by an accident which she had been unable to prevent, been scalded with boiling water, and was at that very moment breathing his last. When I heard this, I easily guessed whose work it was; and soon afterwards my Little Master ran up to me and told me how, to please me, he had served the girl in this way; for she certainly would not escape severe punishment from her parents for her neglect and carelessness, she who had so impudently accused me of laziness."

One more example of this sort is that of Jana Armacourt, at Lauch, March 1588, who took three sheaves of corn from a neighbour's field and hid them in Alexée Cabuse's garden as the most convenient spot in which to conceal her theft; but she was not secret enough to avoid being seen in the act by Cabuse, who happened to be in a secluded part of her garden. Cabuse, as women will, told the neighbours what she had seen; and in consequence Jana not only began to be ill spoken of, but was also brought into some danger (for in Lorraine the penalty for stealing anything from another man's garden is the lash). Therefore her anger and burning in-

dignation against Cabuse were beyond words, and she did not cease to look for any possible means to exact a fully satisfactory vengeance for so great an injury. As, therefore, she was brooding deeply over this problem, her Demon approached her and chided her for her sloth in allowing this weight to rest upon her mind for so long, when she had so often proved that he was always ready to help her whenever she desired to be revenged: she had only to give her consent, or to leave the business to him, and it would not be long before the woman was punished for her mischievous tongue. Jana said that such was her wish, and at once that busy minister flew to Alexée (who was then watching her flocks in the meadows, and was trying to drive back an animal which had broken into a neighbouring corn-field), caught her up in a whirlwind and dashed her to the ground with such force that her leg was broken, and left her so stunned by her fall that she had to be carried home half dead. This story was told in identical words by Jana and Alexée, though they were questioned separately and neither of them knew what the other had said. And the whole thing was proved beyond any doubt by the evidence of many people who had actually witnessed the event.

It is a matter of the greatest debate whether any man can have so great power against his fellows, or can have at his beck and call all the Demons of the universe to bring loss or destruction upon whomsoever he pleases by a mere curse or spell. That this is so was, at any rate, the belief of the ancients in times past, as is shown by the extant fragments of the Twelve Tables: HE WHO HAS REMOVED THE CROPS BY ENCHANTMENT; and again HE WHO HAS CAST AN EVIL SPELL (Pliny, XXVIII, 2, and XXX, 1). From this it may clearly be understood that even at that time there were certain secret and ancient curses so potent that nothing against which

they were directed could escape calamity and disaster. It is true that Seneca derides this notion, saying that such things could not be done in so open a manner, and at the same time defy all the efforts of the philosophers to discover their cause; but no one need have his belief shaken on that account; for Seneca here refers to the rain showers which were thought to be both caused and dispersed by enchantment; and this could only seem utterly impossible and absurd to a man who related everything to natural laws. In his *De Ira*, XVIII, he says: "It is difficult to alter Nature; and once the elements have been compounded for a particular result, they cannot be changed." But he was an avowed Stoic, as is clear from nearly all his written work and from the evidence given by Tacitus and Suetonius in their Lives of him; and that School of Philosophers always rejected as impossible anything which was not in accordance with Nature. Finally, his opinion in this matter is refuted by the examples and records that are everywhere to be found in writers of undoubted authority.

Plutarch writes that Nomphis, in the Fourth Book of the *Herculeæ*, tells a story which can by no means be accounted fabulous of a huge boar that ravaged all the countryside around Xanthus,\* a city of Lycia, destroying the crops and fruits, until it was killed by Bellerophon; and when they gave him no thanks for this great service, he earnestly prayed to Neptune to punish them for their ingratitude. Accordingly, their fields were flooded with salt water, so that all the crops were rotted and perished; and they were not delivered from this calamity until Bellerophon, moved by the women's entreaties, prayed Neptune at last to pardon the citizens of Xanthus. I am

\* "Xanthus." Bellerophon in later ages was worshipped as a god in Lycia; see Pausanias, II, ii, 24; and Quintus Smyrnaeus, X, 162.

the more disposed to believe this story because the Little Masters of our present witches (who are, without doubt, the gods which men once worshipped) do the same sort of thing even now. For whenever something happens to offend a witch there is always a Demon ready to revenge her wrongs even more drastically than she herself had wished; and the Demons exult when they are prayed to contrive some help or retribution in such cases. Thus they lead in one unbroken chain from the original wrong to resentment, from resentment to revenge, and from revenge to a sacrilegious and detestable cult which is by far the worst of the abominations into which they try to seduce mankind. Indeed it is the way of nearly all witches now to take offence at the very slightest provocation, to spit forth their resentment with the greatest acrimony, and so at last, after finding some satisfaction and consolation in retribution, to bring some remedy for the evils which they have caused. This can be seen in the case of Bellerophon, who was first moved to anger, then inflicted disaster, and then drove those whom he had thus afflicted to supplicate him for help in their desperate straits. Similarly, when Xerxes had been for three days in difficulties owing to contrary winds, on the fourth day he asked the Mages to calm the tempest. And (says Herodotus in *Polymnia*), they did so by sacrificing certain animals and performing certain rites in honour of Thetis and the Nereids.

But let us return to our consideration of the secret potency of curses, especially those which are uttered by men themselves against either individuals or communities. We know from ancient history that certain verbal formulas (which Livy calls spells of execration) were used by Generals and Dictators when they invoked the Gods to curse cities and armies. I shall quote in its entirety an example from Macrobius (*Saturnal*, III, 9) of a

comprehensive curse upon the persons and fortunes of the enemy, than which no clearer formula is to my knowledge extant:—

"O Father Dis, O Shades of Jupiter, or by whatever other name it is right to invoke you, fill full of panic, fear and terror all that city and army which I have in my mind; and whosoever bears arms or weapons against our legions and army, do you confound those armies, those enemies, those men and their cities and lands, and all who live in the lands and cities of this place and district: take from them the light of heaven: curse and execrate the enemy's army, his cities and his lands, with the strongest curse ever pronounced against an enemy. By the faith of my office I give and consecrate them to you on behalf of the Roman People and our armies and legions. If you will perform this according to my wishes, intention and understanding, then whosoever accomplishes this vow, let it be done aright. With three black sheep I beseech thee, O Mother Earth, and thee, O Jupiter."

As he invokes the Earth, he touches the ground with his hands. As he invokes Jupiter, he raises his hands to Heaven. And as he takes his vow, he places his hands upon his breast.

By this curse the ancient Annals record that the Stoeni,\* and the cities of Fregellae,† Gabii,‡ Veii§ and

\* "Stoeni." A Ligurian people in the Maritime Alps, conquered by Q. Marcius Rex, 118 B.C. (Valerius Maximus, X, 8).

† "Fregellae." The modern Ceprano, was an ancient and important town of the Volsci, conquered by the Romans and colonized, 328 B.C. It took part with the allies in the Social War and was destroyed by Opimius (Livy, VIII, 22; Velleius Paterculus, II, 6).

‡ "Gabii." In early times one of the most powerful Latin cities. It was taken by Tarkinus Superbus by stratagem (Livy, I, 53). In the time of Augustus it was in ruins. Horace ("Sermonum," I, xi) has: *Gabiis desertior uicus*.

§ "Veii." One of the most ancient and eminent cities of Etruria. It was taken by the

Fidenae|| within the boundaries of Italy; and outside those boundaries Carthage and Corinth, and many hostile armies and towns of Gaul, Spain, Africa and Mauretania, and other nations were utterly destroyed. And many believe that this also was the cause of certain historical incidents, as when for no apparent reason all the men and horses of an army have been seized with a sudden terror and have taken to flight; for it is thought that this terror was sent upon them by the invocation of the curse of Pan or some other of the Gods; and therefore it was called a *Panic* by Pausanias, and the *Fear sent from Heaven* by Pindar. Furthermore, not only soldiers, but civilians also become involved in these panics when the Powers cannot be induced to make an end of their destruction of a nation.

Actaeus placed a blazing hurdle on the way by which Crassus would go; and when Crassus came to the place, this man stood up and, after performing certain rites and libations, uttered a fearful and horrible curse, calling upon the names of terrible and hitherto unheard-of Gods. And it is believed that this curse was not without effect, in view of the remarkable and memorable Parthian defeat which followed not long after (Plutarch in *Vita M. Crassi*; Cicero, *De Divinatione*). It was, besides, the opinion of the gravest and soberest men that the

dictator Camillus in the year 396 (Livy, V, 8-22; Cicero, "De Divinatione," I, 44; III, 32; Plutarch, "Camillus," V). Veii was then abandoned, and although an attempt was made under Augustus to colonize it, and it ranked as a *municipium*, by the reign of Hadrian it had again sunk into decay.

|| "Fidenae." An ancient city in the land of the Sabines. It frequently revolted and was as frequently recaptured by the Romans. The last struggle took place in 438 B.C., and in the following year it was destroyed by the conquerors. Subsequently the town was in some sort rebuilt, but it is spoken of as a poor place (Cicero, "De Lege Agraria," II, 35; Horace, "Sermonum," I, xi, 7; Juvenal, X, 100).



danger from such curses was not to be despised, for whatever reason and by whomever they were uttered. Suetonius *Caligula*, III, says that Germanicus suffered Piso to break his laws and oppress his clients for a long time, and did not become enraged against him until he found that he was using sorcery and cursings against him; but then he commanded his servants to avenge him if any evil befell him.

In the same manner it is our custom to-day to threaten those who are on terms of enmity with us, especially if they are under any suspicion of witchcraft, that if any evil happens to us we shall hold them to be responsible. And this is often a very useful precaution; for it has often been found by experience that it has frightened them into desisting and withdrawing from their wicked intentions. The Latins were not the first to act upon this opinion; for Hesychius,\* as well as Aristophanes in his lost play, *The Seasons*,† speak of a temple at Athens dedicated to the Furies.‡ I think that it was for the same reason that the Latins built temples to Fever,§ *Vertumnus*|| and *Veiovis*, lest these deities should

be provoked by such curses to bring harm and misfortune upon them; for that it was a common practice to invoke these deities is shown by the writings left by the orators of that time. Aeschines, in his speech against Ctesiphon, said: "He prays that the earth may not bear fruit; and that women may not bear children like their parents, but monsters," etc. Very much the same curse comes to the lips of witches in our time when they have been begging and someone has refused them; for nothing is so common as for them to utter a wish that all his family may die of starvation, that his wife may give birth to monsters, and his whole house be infested with prodigies and portents. Nor (deplorable as it is) are such curses always uttered aloud in words, as we have remarked elsewhere; for in the same speech Aeschines said: "This fellow put a curse (if it may properly be so called) in writing, to the effect that any city or individual or nation which opposed him should be under the curse of Apollo and Artemis." This also is a common practice of our witches; for it is not only the domestic and private fortunes of an individual that they ruin and subvert with their curses, but very often also the common interests of the whole public. In the case of an individual they attack his cattle, beasts of burden, wife, children, and even his life; but they also bring ruin upon all the flocks, crops, vintages and often whole villages and towns. Moreover, they have at their call Demons who will at once execute their desires, either by means of a disease, or a blight, or lightning, or an opening of the earth, if the things that they have cursed have not been commended to the protection of God; for otherwise it is certain that they are unable to harm anything in the very least, as we have fully shown elsewhere.

Different Demons have charge of

\* "Hesychius." An Alexandrine grammarian under whose name a large Greek dictionary, containing much literary and archaeological information, has been preserved to us.

† "The Seasons." This play of Aristophanes, now lost, is quoted by Athenaeus and other later writers.

‡ "Furies." The sanctuary and cavern of the Erinyes at Athens were near the Areopagus.

§ "Fever." Febris, personified as a deity, had three temples in Rome, the principal of which was on the Palatium, in the neighbourhood of the Velabrum. The words of Cicero, "*De Natura Deorum*," III, xxv, are very apt: "Qui tantus error fuit, ut perniciosius etiam rebus non modo nomen deorum tribueretur, sed etiam facta constituerentur. Febris enim fanum in Palatio, et Orbonae ad aedem Larum, et aram Malae Fortunae Esquilis consecratam uidemus." Orbona was the tutelary goddess of parents bereft of their children.

|| "Vertumnus." The god of the changing year, and hence the deity who gives good seasons.

Also as a symbol of mutability, wherefore Horace says "*Vertumnus natus iniquis*" of an unstable man ("*Sermonum*," II, vii, 14).

different duties, as was the case with the Gods of the Pagans. One stirs up tempests on land, and another storms at sea; this disease is brought by one, and that by another, while a third calamity is the work of yet another. I do not know whether it is this that has given rise to the erroneous idea that when witches curse anyone, they wish him to be struck with a sickness which they believe to be under the control of some particular demi-god or Saint: as when they curse a man with the evils of S. John\* or S. Antony or S. Manius† or S. Anastasius,‡ meaning by this epilepsy, the sacred fire, impetigo, and madness. For many believe that it is those Saints who send these ills upon men, and that they are to be worshipped, and even imaged, accordingly. They who hold such opinions would do well to consider that

The Gods may not be jealous, nor do evil,§

unless they have made themselves Gods like those which the ancients, blinded by the darkness of their errors,

\* "S. John." Other Saints particularly invoked in cases of epilepsy are the three Holy Magi; S. Prix, Bishop of Clermont; S. Lambert; and the Blessed Joachim Piccolomini, O.S.M.

† "S. Manius." S. Manços, Bishop of Evora. Portuguese writers believe this Saint to have been sent into Spain as a missionary by the Apostles; but it would appear from his Acts that he was put to death by the Jews in the fourth century.

‡ "S. Anastasius." Once a Magician; an officer in the army of Chosroes when that monarch carried the Cross from Jerusalem to Persia. This event led to the conversion of the young soldier, who became a monk at Jerusalem. Later he returned to his native country to convert the people from their magic and the worship of fire. After terrible sufferings he was strangled and his head struck off, 22 January, 628.

§ "Evil." Claudian, "De Raptu Proserpinae," III, 27-28:

nec enim liuiscere fas est,  
Uel nocuisse Deos.

believed to be terrible, fierce and baleful, and the ministers of those evils which a man wished to be inflicted on his fellows with the utmost cruelty and severity.

It may be argued that the men of those times, who voluntarily surrendered themselves to the power of Demons, were an easy prey to such misfortunes and calamities; but that they are not so now that God has taken them under His care and protection as members of His flock. But this is not the case; for both the Hebrews and the Christians had their curses and maledictions, which were so bound up with their religion that no one who had justly incurred them might escape with impunity. King Ahaziah sent a centurion with fifty soldiers to bring Elijah to him, and he found him on the top of a hill and bade him come down, saying that, if he did not do so of his own accord, he had been sent to bring him by force. Elijah answered that he would show a sign to prove that he was a true prophet, and that at his prayer fire would come down from heaven and consume the captain and his soldiers; and when he had uttered this curse against him, there came down fire and consumed the centurion and his company. Then Elisha, his follower and inseparable companion (as Josephus calls him), cursed the children who mocked him, saying: "Go up, thou bald head!" and forty and two of them were rent in pieces by bears. David also pronounced a curse of vengeance against Joab for the slaying of Abner, which was fulfilled when he was put to death as he held to the horns of the altar. And in his Psalms, especially in the Fifty-fifth and the Hundred and ninth, David utters a curse upon his enemies: "Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell." It must not be thought that this was a mere idle venting of his spleen; but that he was moved by zeal for the glory of the Lord to utter those words, and hoped that it would befall them

as he had said. We read in the Gospel that when Jesus was hungry He came upon a fig tree and, finding no fruit upon it, put a curse of perpetual sterility upon it. S. Paul struck Elymas the Sorcerer with blindness; and he delivered Hymenaeus and Alexander to Satan; and though some have understood that this merely meant that they were shut out from the Church and made bondsmen of Satan, others think that physical death was also implied. For in another place we read that this was the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, who fell down dead simply at hearing the Apostle's rebuke; according to the prophecy of Isaiah, who said: "With the breath of their mouth they shall slay the wicked."

There is, then, no question but that there are Demons, the maledictory invocation of which often brings a fatal result. But there is legitimate scope for inquiry and doubt as to the method by which they are to be invoked. There are some who hold that such a result follows naturally from the utterance of certain verbal syllables and formulas, and that there is some potency in the manner and order of their pronunciation, and in the number of the words, to produce an effect quite different from the actual signification of the words. But this seems to me just as ridiculous and absurd as the similar belief in the virtue of written characters and letters; for there must be some rational connexion between the active and passive principles if they are to produce any effect. How can it be possible for a mere vocal noise to act so powerfully as to kill thus in an instant a solid body, often when it is at a great distance away? What can there be in common between written characters and numbers, and the breath drawn by living animals? The same letters, syllables and sounds serve the accuser in his prosecution, the accused in his defence, and the Judge in his sentence; but no one would maintain that for that reason

they have power of life and death to be used at each man's discretion. Charts and diagrams show how and where a house may profitably or otherwise be built; but they cannot either shake or strengthen the building, even if they be written and repeated a thousand times on paper, or in the air, or on wax.

Plato in the *Timaeus* maintains that all things celestial and human, and the whole natural universe, depend upon numbers; and in the *Parmenides* he ascribes such divinity to the *One*, that he says that Unities are the only true and immortal substances; such as the Godlike Essence which he calls the mind or the soul. But there is no trace in his doctrine of this incantation and cursing by means of numbers.

Others say that it is the influence of the stars which makes these curses effective; but this view seems to be no nearer to the truth. For it is agreed that the stars are universal and immutable; whereas witches rise up and curse as often as their anger is aroused against this or that man. Others, again, ascribe these injuries to the breath breathed by the witches, as they utter their curses, from their poisonous breasts; just as the Triballi\* and Illyrians, and the Bithiaef in Scythia, are said to have bewitched with the mere look from their eyes (Pliny, VII, 2). But here again there is much that is absurd and incredible. For, in the first place, as has already been said, such poison cannot be of sufficient virulence to reach people at a distance: moreover, how can a witch without danger to himself keep a poison in his bosom which will be noxious and fatal to others when he breathes it upon them?

Again, if all these things have power to hurt, how comes it that they have also power to heal? For I remember

\* "Triballi." A people of Lower Moesia.

† "Bithiaef." This name was given to certain women in Scythia, said to have two pupils to each eye.



reading that witches, by pronouncing a curse in a certain formula, have thrown many into a grievous sickness; and then, moved by their prayers, or by fear, or by some other reason, they have restored them to health by repeating the same words backwards. Thus the wound and the remedy both proceed from the same words: even as Circe took away and restored men's reason with the same wand, and by the same process changed men into beasts and beasts into men: similarly, it is recorded in many Histories that there was a bull which fell down dead when certain words were whispered in its ear, and was restored to life when the same words were repeated.

Therefore I prefer to believe that all these things are signs and symbols of something more secret which they cover as it were with a disguise. For a deeper and more careful consideration will show that their one true source is the Demons: the reason doubtless being that it was so arranged by the pact between the Demon and the witch; or that the same words and characters and numbers are used, which were at first ordained in the pact of some other witch by whom later witches have been instructed. For this reason S. Augustine (*De doctrina, Christiana*, II) says that it was so constituted in the abominable association of Demons and men as a pledge of their treacherous and disloyal friendship; and we may well call it, in the words of Isaiah, a covenant with death and an agreement with hell.

Someone may say that this view is inconsistent with what we have just said of the Holy Fathers, and Jesus our Saviour, and His Apostles and disciples; but it is not so. For a man to rush furiously and madly to avenge a private injury is a very different matter from being impelled by love and zeal for God's glory to avenge that which is done or said in contempt and despite of Him with the use of forbidden arts. It matters much whether such an action is grateful and accept-

able to God as furthering His purposes, or whether He rejects it as proceeding from unworthy motives. When the messengers of Christ came to a certain village of the Samaritans to prepare the necessaries of life for the Lord and those that were with Him, and the men of the village rejected them and would not receive the Lord within their gates, His disciples James and John said: "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did?" But Jesus turned and rebuked them, and said: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." As if He would say: "Elias, whom you bring forward as an example, performed the judgment of God which was commanded him by the Spirit; but you, not at the command of God but through the prompting of the flesh, wish to inflict summary vengeance" (*S. Luke ix, 52-56*).

It was for this reason also that Onias, a just man who lived many years ago, would not yield to the prayers of his fellow-townsmen that he should curse the priests who, with Aristobulus, had taken sanctuary in the temple. Josephus (*Antiq. Jud.* XIV, 3) says that, foreseeing the civil strife at Jerusalem, he had hidden himself in retirement; but they sought him out and led him to their camp, and asked him, as he had once by his prayers brought rain in a time of drought and so prevented the failure of the crops, so now to put Aristobulus and all his followers under the curse of Heaven. When, after having for a long time refused, he was coerced by the mob, he stood up among them and prayed as follows: "O God, the King of all this world; since both these who stand here with me are Thy people, and they whom they oppose are Thy priests, I pray that Thou wilt not hear the prayers of either of them against the other." For he chose to court certain danger to his life (for he was at once stoned by the people for this prayer) rather than to yield to their

base passions and curse innocent men.

The story of Balak is well known even to the most ignorant: how he sent the prophet Balaam to curse the Israelites, but that he could not; for the very ass upon which he rode obstinately resisted him, and even expostulated with its master in human speech because he did not understand that he was prevented by Heaven from that which he was hastening to do. And so, not only did he not curse the Israelites, but they were blessed by the very Demon who, it is certain, is above all zealous for the destruction of men.

(If the Demon wishes to hide his wickedness under a veil of probity, he thinks that he cannot more conveniently do so than by assuming a hatred and detestation of that very sin. Thus it is no uncommon thing for the vilest whores to speak in praise of modesty.)

Similarly, Plutarch tells of a priestess at Athens who could not be induced to curse Alcibiades at the bidding of the people, because she said that she had entered the priesthood in order to pray, and not to curse.

Therefore it is the more to be wondered at that such curses are to-day so frequently in the mouths of nearly all Christians, that through use they have ceased to be regarded as worthy of condemnation or rebuke; and that the habit has grown so strong that they are often uttered without thought, and are no longer considered a crime. Yet S. Jerome (*In Leviticum*) proclaims that they who neglect to restrain their habit of cursing, even if the curse does not come from their hearts, nevertheless (according to Isaiah) sully their lips and befoul their mouths. S. Peter also, to put a greater check upon that licence, strictly bade us to speak blessings always, knowing that we were called to receive blessing by inheritance; and not to be provoked by wrangling, not to be angered by injuries, not to be exasperated by contentions. For even Michael the Archangel (says S. Jerome), when

contending with the Devil over the body of Moses, did not dare to incur the sin of blasphemy by cursing even him who was most worthy of malediction.

What, then, must we think will be the result of a carelessly uttered curse? Surely that it will fall upon him who uttered it; just as when a man shoots an arrow into the sky, it often falls back upon himself. As the bird flying aimlessly, as the swallow wandering at large, so (says Solomon, *Proverbs xxvi*) shall the curse causeless return upon him who sent it forth. Yet still we dare to wish that we may be damned if a matter prove to be other than we have stated it to be, although our inner conscience convicts us of insincerity. Therefore we should not be surprised if the Arch-schemer, who is always in wait for us to make us his prey, often takes us literally at our word: as Weyer tells (*De praest. Daem.* cap. 17) that it happened not long since to one who, to serve his own interests, perjured himself in giving evidence; and to inspire the greater belief in his truthfulness added a wish that he might go to perdition if he was telling a lie. For the Devil at once bore him away before the eyes of all, and he was no more seen. This man deserved no pity, seeing that by his own thoughtless and rash lying he courted his own damnation; for *uolenti non fit iniuria*.

But how vile a thing it is for angry parents to curse their children and so bring harm upon them! For we have the evidence of history that this has often happened. Plato (*De legibus*, Lib. VII) even held that no more terrible thing could happen to children; and even that it was unlucky, and not seldom brought misfortune, to be merely indignant with them. "I know men," says Olaus Magnus (*Hist. de Gent. Septent.* XVI, 3), "as old as myself, who have been cut off from their fathers' blessing, and have continually suffered every kind of misfortune, poverty, calamity and

infamy." It is for this reason that from the most ancient times the lay population of the Northern countries have used the following custom:—when their boys and girls are going to bed, they recite the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary in the order of their ages, and receive their father's blessing. And in *Ecclesiasticus*, chapter iii, verse 9, we read: "The blessing of the father establisheth the houses of children; but the curse of the mother rooteth out foundations."

But perhaps I have dwelt too long on a matter which is not open to much doubt or controversy. Let us, then, proceed to some more examples.



#### CHAPTER X

*Another Example in proof of the same Argument: and how the Murders committed by Demons often leave no trace behind them.*

HERE follows another example, not unlike those given above, concerning one Bernard Bloquat. As Joanna à Banno was working in the fields, she saw this man going by with his horses towards Strassburg, where he had some business; and remembering that he had long ago done her an injury which she had not yet avenged, she cursed and execrated him so that the misfortune befell him which I have narrated in the Summary of this work. For she had hardly begun her curse before he fell headlong from his cart with such force that he was instantly killed: yet no part of his body was injured, there was no wound or bruise or swelling, no limb was dislocated or twisted, nor was there any lesion in any part; so that it is to be believed that his life was cut off and his breath stopped all in a moment by the Demon. And lest anyone should think that the truth of this depended on that witch's confession alone, he should know that it was in every respect confirmed by Jean le Charretier, who had

accompanied Bloquat on that journey to help him; for many days before the witch confessed he had spread his account far and wide. Moreover, the new and unheard-of manner of his death was itself an argument that it was caused by some rare power of evil.

Among other things, this story shows the prompt diligence of the Demon in obeying his subjects' invitation to inflict an injury. Consequently we may here add the testimony of Jeanne of Montenay at Condé, July 1582, to the effect that she rarely had asked the Demon to bring misfortune on anyone without the deed following immediately upon her word: so eager and assiduous is he to seize every opportunity of ill-doing.



#### CHAPTER XI

*Yet another Example, the Credibility of which is confirmed by the Authority of the Ancients: and of the Protection which must above all be sought against the Wiles and Assaults of Satan.*

THE following story, also told in my Summary, is illustrative of the same argument. A witch, who was commonly known as Lasnier, used to beg from door to door at Nancy, and by her age and infirmity so aroused the pity of the more influential citizens that she every day received so much alms from them that she was well able to lead a fairly comfortable life. One day she was, in her usual manner, importunately asking alms at the Deputy Governor's\* door, when unfortunately his eldest son came out and told her to come back at another time because it was not just then convenient to trouble the servants. She took great offence at this and, as is the way of all witches, promptly cursed him. Immediately, as though he had caught his foot against a stone, he fell

\* "Governor's." The Deputy Governor of Nancy from 1577 to 1607 was Renault de Gournay, Seigneur de Villers.



with such violence and was in such pain that he had to be carried back into the house at once; and there he told his servants how and in what manner the whole thing had happened; adding that he did not owe his misfortune to his own carelessness, but that he had been struck from behind by some higher force, and that he had no doubt that he would have broken a limb if God had not helped him as he fell. "For," he said, "when I arose in the morning I had commended myself to God with the sign of the Cross." But not even after this would the witch let him be; for her Demon was furious on learning of the failure of her attempt, and even more vehemently urged and required her to find some means of destroying the young man, saying that she could easily do so if she attacked him when he was not protected by his morning prayers and the sign of the Cross. For the Demon himself acknowledged that this had been the cause of the failure of the former attempt. After some days it happened that the young man put his arm out of an upper window to take some fledglings from a nest against the wall, when he was lifted up from behind and thrown through the window with such force that he was brought back into the house for dead. But after some hours he regained consciousness and, seeing his father weeping and lamenting by his side, said: "Do not be angry with me, father, because of this accident. It was certainly not my fault; for something came at me from behind and thrust me out in spite of my struggles, and I was forcibly overcome and cast down by something very heavy." And indeed there had been found by him as he lay on the ground a log of wood from a pile stored in an upper loft for household use. He kept constantly to this account, and died after a few days. Shortly afterwards, by reason of information received from other witches, and because she had for a long time been suspect of witchcraft, and

as a result of careful inquiry into the matter we have just related, Lasnier was cast into prison; and after I had examined her in accordance with the depositions of the witnesses, I at last induced her, without applying any torture, to make open confession of all her crimes. And among these she told in the same words that which the young man had so constantly affirmed. For as soon as the Demon had accomplished that deed he had flown to the meat market where she was and told her everything that had happened; and she maintained this assertion until she met her death by fire at the hands of the executioner.

This savage ferocity of Satan against men is no new thing now for the first time heard of; for the writings of the ancients, both sacred and profane, contain more examples of it than I can conveniently use. It was Satan who stirred up the great wind from the wilderness, which overthrew the house where the sons of Job were feasting, so that they all perished in its fall (Job i, 19). Asmodeus, that is, the Destroying Angel (whom the Rabbins call the Angel of Death), slew the seven husbands of Sara the daughter of Raguel on the night when each of them first approached the marriage bed (*Tobit* iii, 8). When the Proconsul Aegeas ordered S. Andrew to be crucified at Patrae in Achaia, the evil spirit seized him and strangled him. In the chapter where Psellus describes six kinds of Demon, Marcus says Demons often destroy men by fire or by a fall; and that they overwhelm and sink ships laden with men. Lemne Levin says that they secretly mingle themselves with the food, drink, airs and breaths which we take and receive into our bodies, and pollute and vitiate many other things which we use for the maintenance of our health. Finally, the Holy Scriptures proclaim that our adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour (1 *Peter* v, 8).

Therefore to so savage and fierce a beast we oppose the shield of solid faith, the sword of the spirit, the helmet of salvation, and our other reserves of protection (so to speak), such as temperance, integrity, vigilance, fasting, prayers, and constant supplications especially in the early hours of the morning. For the witches themselves confess that they are thwarted and balked in their attempts by such means. And certainly there is no lack of Biblical authority that the Holy Prophets practised their use. David in his distress cries out: O Lord, my God, early will I seek thee: In the morning will I stand before thee and behold thee: In the morning my prayer shall come before thee. So also Isaiah says: In the morning, in the morning hath the Lord turned His ear to me. And again: With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early. For at the prayer of His people the Lord will defend and protect them from the dangers which threaten them; not according to the desires of their own hearts, but according to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore I do the more wonder at the folly and ignorance of some who blame the Christian customs; for when the church bell rings in the morning to summon men to their prayers and devotions and, so to speak, to tweak them by the ear, there are men who at once vilify and condemn this practice as having been instituted by those with whom they differ in matters of religious worship.

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## CHAPTER XII

*More Examples to the same Effect: and that the Demons cast headlong down those Whom they have had Licence from Witches to injure.*

NOT unlike the above is the following story of some peasants, one of whom was trashing the too luxuriant

branches from the top of a tree, another throwing fruit from a storehouse into the yard to be pressed, while a third was stacking and arranging hay on the top of a waggon; and although none of them was taking any careless risks, they were all thrown and dashed to the ground so violently that they had to be carried away half dead; yet there was no sign of any who had attacked them. The following, again, is even more to our point. There was in a remote wood a pear tree of which Jean Rotier had long made up his mind to have the fruit; for he did not think that, in such an obscure and inconspicuous place, it would be noticed by anyone who might wish to snatch this titbit from his lips. None the less, the tree was noted by Desire Salet, his fellow-villager, who made up his mind to be the first to get at the pears; but Rotier found him in the very act, and it was not long before he paid the penalty for disappointing him of his prize; for such men very easily take offence and are quick to seek revenge. Accordingly, as was his custom in other cases, he cursed Desire, who was suddenly caught up in a whirlwind and thrown to the ground, and was hurt so in one leg that he was unable to move from that place until some shepherds who were minding their sheep in the glades near by ran up at his cries, and helped to bring him home. And his leg was not yet healed at the time when Rotier first made this matter clear by his own free confession.

Of the same kind is the story of Epvrette Hoselotia, at Toul, February 1587. This woman had a son in the service of Jean Halecourt, who had been harshly treated by his master on account of a certain theft of which he, more than any of the other servants, was suspected. Resenting this, and wishing for some revenge, his mother eagerly sought her opportunity; and as Jean was bringing his horses back from pasture, negligently riding upon

one of them, she and her Demon came up without being seen by any, and lowered the horse's neck so that its rider slipped off to the ground and broke his leg. And he still seemed lame and crooked from that fall when he appeared to give evidence against that witch.



### CHAPTER XIII

*Some further Examples; and how Demons and their Attendant Witches set Fire to Houses and Buildings.*

CLAUDE FELLET was always quarrelling with a woman who was her neighbour; for it is often a fruitful source of friction when those of equal condition live near to each other. And she had for a long time pondered in her heart how she could bring some secret misfortune upon her neighbour; for it was necessary that it should be done in secret, since if any evil befell the woman, all the inhabitants would at once blame Fellet for it. Accordingly, she formed the following plot with her Demon. She was to go to her usual work in the fields, while he would do her business for her in the town: in this way no suspicion could attach to her, since she would be away from home. The neighbour's house was bolted and barred, and behold! her infant son whom the mother had left alone in the house was heard crying pitiably within. All who heard it ran up and broke open the door to see what had happened to make it cry so; and they found him smothered and buried all over with red-hot embers. They shook these off with all speed, and took him from his cradle in a desperate effort to save him; but he was already breathing his last, and died in their hands. The rumour then began to spread that this was certainly Fellet's doing, for it was said that she had already taken the same sort of vengeance on several others: therefore she was examined in

respect of this crime and others of which she had long been suspected; and finally she was induced to confess openly that she was guilty, telling all as it had been done by the Demon at her request, and particularly of the burning embers which he had shovelled from under the hearth and thrown upon the unfortunate child's cradle.

Since we have touched upon the subject of the fires and conflagrations caused by Demons, I have thought good to subjoin some various examples of this aspect of their activities, which may help to elucidate the truth of a matter which has been the subject of much doubt and controversy to many. There is a village named Colmar in the domains of the Lord Abbot of Saint-Evre, Jacques de Tavigny,\* O.S.B., a prelate of most eminent nobility and riches, never sufficiently to be praised for his courtesy,

\* "Jacques de Tavigny." This great and good prelate is one of the glories of the Order of S. Benedict. Being consecrated Abbot in 1558 as successor to Abbot Adrien Baudoir, he ruled his house of Saint-Evre with a firm kindness at a time when, owing to political upheavals and exterior events, there was much relaxation in religious life. On 17 May, 1567, he issued a number of new statutes for his monastery, chiefly with a view to checking too early professions. The noble families would often encourage and even compel the younger scions of their houses to embrace the monastic profession before the striplings could be sure of a true vocation, and as influence often led to high honours, no small evils resulted. In 1595 Jacques de Tavigny was elected Vicar-General of the Benedictine Order for all territories comprised under the Legateship of the Cardinal of Lorraine. He died, however, the following year. Not long before he had begun the restoration of Saint-Evre, which had been greatly damaged during the wars and invasions of 1552. The work was continued by his nephew, Louis de Tavigny, who was elected Abbot of Saint-Evre in 1596. Dom Louis was consecrated Bishop of Christopolis and Suffragan of Toul. The Abbey was completed in 1613. He died 7 August, 1643, and was succeeded as Abbot by his nephew, Dom Marc-François de Cicon.



beneficence and integrity. Not twenty years ago a certain wanton Demon began to throw stones incessantly by day and night at the servants of an inhabitant of this village; but after he had done this for a long time without effect, they began to treat it as a joke and did not hesitate to hurl back taunts and insults at him. Therefore at the dead of night he set fire to the whole house in a moment, so that no amount of water was enough to prevent it from being immediately burned to the ground. This account I eagerly heard from the servants, being led by the strangeness of the event to question them when I chanced to be going that way not many days later.

The following story is the very brother to that of Medea, who sent as a gift to Creusa the daughter of Creon magic fire enclosed in a box, by which the palace in which she was then was burned. Joanna Schwartz at Laach, March 1588, tried with all her might to get Françoise Huyna to give her a piece of dough before she put it in the oven, so that she might make a cake with it for her children. But Huyna refused her, saying that the dough had been measured out to last the whole family for a certain number of days, and she could not give any of it away without causing her own house to go short. Thereupon Joanna never stopped pondering how she might fittingly pay her back for that refusal. But she did not have to wait long; for her Demon gave her a napkin in which were some tiny morsels like chaff, and told her to secrete it in Huyna's house, and to do so quickly; for it would happen that, soon after she had done so, the house would suddenly burst into flames and be consumed with all its furniture. Accordingly she rolled the napkin into a ball, went to Huyna as she was busy in her bakehouse, and offered to sell it to her for use in her loom, which she had heard she was getting ready. And when Huyna said that she did not need it, since she expected to have more than enough to do in household

duties; nevertheless, the good woman put it down in a flour tub that stood near by, saying that if she had no use for it at that time, she might return it at her leisure. Hardly had she left the house when the tub containing the napkin burst into flames, and the whole house caught fire so rapidly that no help could be brought quickly enough. These two women separately gave the same account of this event, and so removed any possible doubt as to its truth.

One more example, not unlike the above, I shall take from Erasmus of Rotterdam (*Epist. famil.*, XXVII, 20). There is a town in Switzerland called Schiltach which was entirely burnt down in a moment on the tenth of April, 1533. And according to the statements made by the inhabitants to the Mayor of Fribourg, which city is eight German miles from the place, the cause of that fire was said to be as follows:—A Demon whistled in a certain part of an inn; and the host, thinking it was a thief, went up but found no one. The whistle was repeated from a higher room, and again the host went up to look for a thief, but again found no one. But when the whistle was again heard, this time from the top of the chimney, it came into the host's mind that it was the work of some Demon. He bade his family keep calm; called two priests; and they performed an exorcism. He answered that he was a Demon. Asked what he was doing there, he said that he wished to burn the town to ashes. When they threatened him with holy things, he said that he cared nothing for their threats, since one of them was a whoremonger and both of them were thieves. A little later he raised up into the air a young woman with whom he had been intimate for fourteen years (although during all this time she had regularly confessed herself and received the Eucharist), and set her on the chimney-pot; gave her a jar, and told her to turn it up. She did this; and within

an hour the whole town was burned out.

We need not be greatly astonished at this power of the Demons to cause such rapid and instantaneous fires, for even to this day we have men who are most skilled in doing the like. I do not refer to explosive powders and such inflammatory substances, by the use of which we see whole houses quickly set on fire and destroyed; for they are matters of common and everyday use. I refer to some occult method which is beyond normal human understanding. Last year there was in the train of a certain Prince a simple fellow from Germany (I name no names, though I could easily do so), who professed that he had that which, if he scattered some of it among the houses, the whole town, many days after he had left it, would be set on fire and burned out. And at last, through an interpreter, he explained to the Count, the Prince's son, the nature of this substance, having first bound them both by an oath never to reveal or communicate the secret to anyone.

I know from Pliny (II, 105) that naphtha has such an affinity for fire that it very readily conducts flame; but he is wide of the mark when he says that it actually causes fire. For, as I hear, it can be kept with perfect safety for many days in the same room with a bright and continual fire burning. But certainly it is an execrable and detestable invention; for, thanks to it, no host is safe from his guests; and the largest and most beautiful cities, which cost many years' labour in the building and perfecting, can in a moment be destroyed at the pleasure of one wicked man, with the consequent ruin of all the inhabitants.

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## CHAPTER XIV

*Two more Examples; and how at the Prayer of their Disciples the Demons obstruct the Breath and choke the Life of those upon whom they wish to be Avenged.*

A CERTAIN peasant named Maluctica was on his way early one morning to a castle by the Moselle to sell some milk there, when a violent whirlwind, although it was perfectly calm everywhere else, so took away his breath that he lay for a long time between life and death. This misfortune had been plotted against him, with the help of a Demon, by Françoise Fellet (at Pagny-sur-Moselle, December 1584), to vent his spite on him for many injuries; as he afterwards freely confessed in mere penitence for his crime.

In the same way Jacobeta Weher of the Dieuze district, September 1584, wished to give vent to her long hatred of a young woman who was her neighbour without incurring any more suspicion; and when the girl was in the fields, the Demon caught her in a violent wind so that she became more swollen day by day, and at last was stifled.

Julius Obsequens says that at Nursia, in the consulship of Lucius Scipio and Caius Laelius, there arose out of a clear sky clouds which killed two men.

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## CHAPTER XV

*Yet other Examples; and that Demons straightway inflict Wounds upon those Whom they have a Mandate from a Witch to Injure.*

COLETTE FISCHER (Gerbeville, May 1585), without lifting her own hand, caused her fellow-towsman Claude Jaquimin to lose one eye, after she had given her Demon a mandate to that effect; as she herself openly

confessed to the Judge when she was tried for witchcraft. Her story was the more believed because Jaquimin afterwards said that the wound to his eye had been caused as it were by a blow from a suddenly released branch of a tree, but that there were no trees for many paces in any direction. Therefore it was suspected that the wound had been caused by some evil art.

A similar story was told by Jacobeta Weher, whom we have just mentioned. "For many reasons," she said, "I detested a certain peasant who was living in the same house with me; but I could see no way of revenging myself without incurring suspicion, for he kept a keen and watchful eye upon me. At last, however, I found a way; for at my entreaty my Demon thrust a thorn deeply into his knee while he was doing something among the bushes; and for three months the wound would not heal, until I felt pity for such long pain and prevailed upon the Demon to make him whole again.

This he promptly did a few days later when the man was wooding in the forest, by putting an unguent upon the wound." All this was confirmed in every detail as the witch had told it, by the peasant when he was afterwards questioned on the matter.

Ammianus Marcellinus (Lib. XXVI) tells that a similar misfortune happened to Apronianus as he was journeying to Syria; and adds that this so roused his gall against witches that as long as he lived he did not cease to prosecute them with every punishment and torture.

That the Demon lends his help to such work should not be doubted by anyone who considers how ready he is to hurt, and what rapid and easy means he has to inflict injuries. Yet I am inclined to doubt the truth of all this story of the thrusting in of a thorn, and the application of an ointment; for it is admitted that the Demon has no need of such adventitious and external aids to such actions.

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## THE THIRD BOOK



### CHAPTER I

*That when we would have the Saints to be the Authors of Sicknesses, we labour under the same Error which made the Pagans formerly impute the Cause of their Misfortunes to one of their Gods. And this has given rise to another Error, that we must go to the same Source for our Remedies; as do those who are stung by Scorpions. That this Error is to no small Degree confirmed by the specious Miracles performed by Demons in their Portents; and it is disputed whether these are merely Illusions, or whether there is any Truth in Them.*

THROUGHOUT the Holy Scriptures we find that God severely punishes the sins of mankind. For because the men of Sodom turned away strangers and polluted each other with their lusts, He utterly destroyed their city and laid a curse upon their whole country, so that it should never bear fruit or anything that grows. And by His prophet Gad, He punished David for numbering the people, offering him the choice of three plagues: either seven years' famine, or three months to be defeated by his enemies, or three days' pestilence among the Hebrews. He punished the Israelites also for their sins and wickedness with seventy years' captivity in Babylon. Finally, in the clearest manner He proclaimed in the Decalogue that He would visit the idolatry of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation. And even now He often draws the sword of His wrath against us, for an example to us, and to recall us from our vices and bring us back into the right way. No one can doubt that His hands are always stretched out upon the wicked.

Avenging God pursues the evil-doers.\*

But no one, however unfamiliar with the teaching of the Fathers, can be ignorant that from the time when men first began to sin God has appointed His ministers of vengeance like a flame of fire consuming the very elements and the whole world. Therefore we must wonder at the ill-advised piety of some who would make those who are numbered with the Blessed the ministers of such calamities; thinking, forsooth, that thus they will be more revered and held in the greater awe by men; for they maintain that one Saint afflicts men with the itch, another with S. Antony's fire, and another with epilepsy, in order to avenge insults and wrongs offered them, as when their worship has been neglected, or in some other manner they have suffered scorn or injury. Even in his time, Porphyrius (*De sacrificiis, de spec. Daem. bonorum atque malorum*) complained that this was the greatest of all the evils wrought by wicked spirits against mankind, that whereas they were themselves the authors of the disaster which befell men, such as pestilence, poverty, earthquakes, upheavals, fires and other like misfortunes and calamities, yet they maliciously ascribed the cause of all these to one of the Gods, whose delight is, on the contrary, in fertility and prosperity. Thus they drive men to impious supplications and rites in the belief that the Gods (whom, according to Cicero, every school of philosophy holds to be above all anger and vindictiveness) are hostile to them; or to the no less impious belief that the Gods are swayed by human emotions when they vent their spite with fire and slaughter and ruin.

Hippocrates vehemently opposed the opinion of those who, when they

\* "Avenging." Seneca, "*Hercules Furens*," II, 385:

*Sequitur superbos ultor a tergo Deus.*

saw any suddenly thrown down and convulsed with epilepsy, ascribed the cause of that sickness to one of the Gods who was angry with him, and thought that it was necessary to placate him either by a votive prayer, or by suspending some charm about the sufferer's neck.

These complaints may with the greater reason be made against the men of our own day, from whose minds the light of the Christian truth has not yet shaken the blindness and ignorance which cause them even yet to worship their *Veioves* and *Robigines* with an open conviction of piety, and to placate them with gifts that they may no more be angry with them, or to purchase their health with some sacrifice, or finally to ward off and avert impending misfortune. I write with special reference to certain old women who are for ever talking of their lucky Saints, and how necessary it is to make pilgrimages to their shrines; and hire themselves for much money to undertake such pilgrimages. I will not occupy myself with amulets, phylacteries, periapts and waxen tablets, night-long watchings, the cross-wise measuring of the sick and other such trash, which are everywhere used with the greatest confidence in their efficacy although they have been specifically anathematised by a Papal edict.\* All such things might be passed over, were it not that they have become notorious by association with certain foul and monstrous prodigies; for such so-called signs and omens of the Saints are accompanied, under the specious name of miracles, by innumerable illusions and impostures of the devil. And although the

deceitfulness of his wiles, and his skill in deluding and imbuing men's minds with detestable ideas, are too well known for me to have much need to expose them here, yet I shall add a few words on this subject, so that even this matter may not be without examples to make it clear.

There is in Metz a shrine † very famous for the marvellous cures which are said to be effected by virtue of le beau Saint Bernard to whom it is dedicated, although he has never yet been beatified. I remember seeing its interior columns draped and hung with linen cloths from which were suspended bricks, coals, balls of tow and hair, trumpery, bits of glass, sword-blades, skins of lizards and toads, and all sorts of such trash, which, in the sight of any who cared to be present, the sick who had been brought there in the greatest agony had either vomited up or ejected from some part of their bodies. There was also a great pile of crutches left behind by those who had been restored to health; who had come there limping with a great effort, but had gone home active and vigorous. At the bidding of Salcedius, who was Governor of that Province, all these things were removed in our time; but the shrine did not for that reason lose its fame; for the crowds who still flock to it are as great as they ever were.

I do not doubt, O Most Illustrious Prince, that you, in your exemplary devotion to God and your outstanding wisdom, will at last reform this abuse when it shall be in your power and you wield supreme authority over things temporal and religious in that district.

\* "Papal edict." As contained in the official Roman edition of the *"Corpus iuris canonici,"* completed in 1582 and issued by Gregory XIII, who reigned 1572-1585. The Pope was famous for his extraordinary knowledge of canon and civil law, and had both studied and professed jurisprudence at the University of Bologna. The reference is: "In Decretis. Cap Non observetis," 26, q. 7.

† "Shrine." It may be observed that there is nothing of which the Church is more suspicious than a wonder-working shrine. Such irregularities as those of which Remy speaks are checked with immediate and drastic measures. Le beau Bernard was a cousin of Duke Jean II, with whom he was at Venice in 1459, and under whose banner he fought in Italy.

I might add many more such examples, if that had been my purpose in beginning this work; but since I have lately given my mind somewhat to this subject, I will relate two instances which came to my notice in this very year. At Richthum, a village in the territory of Count Otho the Rhingrave, Nicolas Wanneson (Morange, September 1587) began to suffer from so grievous a sickness that his recovery was despaired of. A certain witch who was his neighbour had done this to him by her evil arts. As is the way of those suffering from a long and almost desperate illness, he anxiously asked all who visited him if they knew of any cure to tell him of it for the sake of the pity which all must feel for the misfortunes of others. It so happened that the witch was present among them; and either she was moved by pity (a quality in which witches profess that they are not entirely lacking), or else she was afraid of being put to the question by the sick man's relatives (for many threats to that effect had purposely been uttered by all and sundry); but in any case she said that she had seen people cured of the same sickness as soon as they had made and performed a vow to one of the Saints. She added that le beau Bernard was particularly famous for such cures, for she did not know of any who had ever sought his help in vain; and she advised him to send someone who was willing to go to his shrine with a gift, and expiate his sickness for him with the customary prayers. He quickly found one, Hans Jacob by name, who at once undertook and performed that pilgrimage, did everything as he had been told by the witch, and returned to give an account of all that he had done and seen. It was then agreed by all who were at that time with the sick man that, at the very moment that Hans had presented his votive offering, from that same time the man had begun to recover; for it was then that with a great effort he had begun to vomit up

pieces of glass and balls of hair. These objects were shown to Jacob in an earthen vessel to convince him of the truth; and Matis Hay, Maths Meier, Nobis Petter and several others, although they were questioned separately, gave the same account in the same words.

In October 1588 a young kinswoman of mine brought me two iron nails which, together with a great quantity of stinking matter, she had vomited up in the sight of all who were with her in the house at the time. All of us who knew the history and progress of her illness judged that these were the leavings of a sickness with which she had been stricken the year before by Nicolaea Stephana (of whom we shall have something to say later). For by reason of that vomiting a swelling on her stomach which had been as hard as a stone began to subside, and her health, which had been very poor for a whole year, began to improve and mend by degrees.

To this I may well add a parallel case which Lang, an Englishman, writes that he witnessed in the year 1539 when he was practising medicine in the train of the Princes Palatine; namely, that there was in their Palatinate a demoniac woman who, after long and acute pains in the belly, vomited out of her mouth some long curved iron nails, and some brass pins wrapped round with wax and hairs. And that such occurrences were known to the ancients is shown by what Julius Obsequens recounts to have happened at Aretium, in the consulship of Cnaeus Domitius and Caius Cassius, to a certain woman who vomited a quantity of flour from her mouth, while she ejected many other things besides down her nose. And in our own time there have been books enough published which abound in examples of this sort of prodigy.

But I shall not easily be persuaded to agree with those who hold that these things are not what they appear to be, but that our mortal senses are



so deceived by an illusion that they take the appearance for the truth. For as for their argument that nothing can come out but what has already been put in, and that the objects which appear to be ejected in this way are of such a size that not even the most credulous could imagine that they had ever been swallowed down the mouth or inserted up the anus, which are the two largest passages into the body; this can be refuted in more than one way. In the first place, there are many natural diseases which engender certain objects in the body, such as worms in the intestine, calculus in the kidneys, stones in the joints, little animals like ants in the urine, and other such things, which are not retained in the body but are expelled through the very narrowest channels, and often through an open wound. Lemne Levin, speaking on this very subject, says (*De occult. naturae miraculis*, III, 40) that fragments of nails, hairs, bricks, little bones, and stones have often been seen to be squeezed and extracted from purulent ulcers and sores, and that they are thought to be formed by the concretion of festering matters. But no one will deny that such things have either been introduced from outside, or that they have not remained so long in their place without injury to the body. And if examples be sought in proof of the contention that they can be inserted and introduced, there is no lack of well-attested evidence with regard to the matter in the works of recent authors of great praise and repute.

Ambroise Paré writes that there was in Paris a learned man from Bourges named Camers, who incautiously swallowed an ear of corn which passed through his throat into his lung; and he was immediately seized with such acute pains that it seemed as if he must die there and then. But Nature, which neglects no possible means of protecting herself, quickly found a way to rid herself of that hurt; for the ear

worked its way through the lobe of the lungs, the rib muscles, and finally the surrounding membrane, until it was ejected without any harm coming to Camers. The surgeons were Fernel\* and Huguet, men of high and honourable standing in the practice of medicine.

Paré gives another example which is far more amazing even than the last, both because of the size of the object introduced and the dangerous depth of its penetration, and because of its winding and wandering throughout the whole body without any fatal result. There was (he says) a shepherd whom some robbers found in the fields and forced to swallow a six-inch knife with a horn handle as thick as a thumb. He swallowed it, and retained it in his body for six whole months; but he became so thin and emaciated that it was obvious that he was in very great pain. At last there appeared on his groin a stinking abscess which discharged much foul matter, from which in the presence of all the town magistrates the knife was extracted. Jobert of Montpellier, a physician, is said to have kept it carefully in his museum on account of its miraculous rarity, having obtained it from the surgeon who had healed the wound, and who lived at Somières, about eight miles away from Montpellier.

I shall take one more example from the same source. The Prince de Rohan, of one of the most noble and famous houses of Brittany, not long ago kept for his pleasure a fool named Guido who, as is the way of such men to take rash and dangerous risks with themselves, swallowed a knife-blade three fingers long. Twelve days later he discharged it by his anus, after it had passed through all the great length of his guts, of which the duodenum is especially thin and narrow and is rightly so named; and through all the

\* "Fernel." Jean Fernel, "*le Galien moderne*," was Physician in Ordinary to Henri II of France.

multiple and tortuous twists and folds of his entrails.

If then Nature, without transgressing the limits which she has imposed upon herself, can by her own working either generate or admit such objects, what must we think that the Demons will do, to whose power (says Job) nothing can be likened or compared? And if this be admitted, there is nothing to hinder a Demon from raising up mountains to an enormous height in a moment, and then casting them down into the deepest abysses; from stopping the flow of rivers, or even causing them to go backwards; from drying up the very sea (if we may believe Apuleius); from bringing down the skies, holding the earth in suspension, making fountains solid, raising the shades of the dead, putting out the stars, lighting up the very darkness of Hell, and turning upside down the whole scheme of this universe. We often see iron softened and even molten by fire, and again restored to its former rigidity by no greater forces than are at the command of feeble man. Then can anyone still refuse to believe that the Demons, with the great powers that are theirs, can introduce through the many apertures into the human body such pieces of iron and brick and stone! Does he think their size is any obstacle, when the Demons can at their pleasure cause them to contract and diminish even to atoms and again resume their former size when they are in position; or else can so distend the passages into the body that they are able to admit them? What is there in this more difficult than to destroy an aged oak without breaking its bark, or a strong tower without disintegrating the mortar; or to cause a sword to waste away while it rests in its sheath; or to grind to powder all the bones without harming the rest of a man's body; or to kill the foetus while sparing the pregnant woman; or to melt bronze without injury to its receptacle; or to burst the cask and leave all the wine standing

unspilled? Yet all these things are done by lightning, either by its own innate powers and properties, or else as the agent of some Demon, as it is more conveniently argued elsewhere. I remember also seeing in the Province of Bordeaux those who healed dislocated and broken limbs simply by touching the girdles of those who had been thus crippled, although they were many miles away from them. Cato (*Apud Plin.*, XXVIII, 2) also says that the same thing was done in his day. I do not see how this can be possible, unless we admit the secret working of a Demon who subtly enters the affected limbs and applies some unknown cure, very much in the way that, as we have just said, he performs many other prodigies in the human body. And if anyone tries to reconcile all these things with the normal processes and operations of Nature, he might just as well try to measure the heavens with his hand.

But, it is argued (Cardan, *De subtil.*, XVIII), jugglers and conjurers so delude the spectators' eyes that they seem to thrust a knife into their throats and then bring it out at their mouths, to pierce their breast with a sword, to bury a hunting spear in a vital part of their entrails, to cut off their hands, to pierce through their noses, and inflict other wounds upon themselves. Again, they draw great lengths of string from their throats as if they were unrolling a ball of it; they mutilate and cut off their ears; and it is said that not long since in Germany one was seen to cut off his head and immediately put it back in its place without suffering any hurt. They devour a whole waggon of hay together with the driver and the horses, and perform many other marvels which, as they all confess, are done with the help of Demons. To how much greater lengths, then, will such deceptions proceed when they are wrought by the Demons alone without the agency of any man? Will it not be very easy for them, when

a sick man is about to vomit, secretly to place such pieces of iron and other trash in his mouth so that all the spectators will think that they have been vomited in the natural manner; or to create the illusion of a wound in the skin, through which these things appear to be emitted? Surely, they say, we should admit and acknowledge this as being by far the more likely and probable explanation, and less antagonistic to nature.

But there is one fact which entirely refutes such an argument. These objects are not only seen by the eyes, which are admittedly open to deception: the reality of them is proved by the fact that they can be touched and felt, whenever they are surgically extracted from various bodies. I remember when I was a boy my father, who was then Mayor of Charmes, examined a certain witch who, among her other crimes, confessed the following:—that by her evil art she had caused an abscess to grow on the calf of her neighbour Blanchemont, and that if they cared to open it, a ball would come out of it. They therefore lanced the abscess, and found in it a big ball such as weavers use, which was with difficulty extracted by the surgeon, Volsella, in sight of all who were present. I saw this ball with my own eyes when, at my father's order, it was brought to our house by the surgeon; and all the servants examined it carefully and attentively. Lang, whose authority I have recently praised, has recorded a similar instance. There is, he says, in Germany a town of the name of Ulrich, where a farmer called Nenssesser was afflicted with mysterious bodily pains so violent that he could not endure them, and cut his throat; for while he was yet alive an iron nail had been extracted from under his skin, causing him great pain. The surgeons, wishing to examine and discover the cause of this rare sickness, opened the dead man's body; and in the presence of all the townsfolk who cared to attend,

there were found in his intestines a stick, four brass knives, two pieces of iron, and a quantity of wool and hairs.

When, therefore, the actuality of these things is so obvious to the senses, it is absurd to argue that because the matter is strange and difficult it must be an illusion; as if anything unheard of and difficult to understand must on that account be unfeasible and impossible. Is it not better to examine each single case on its merits than to affect an incredulous doubt and uncertainty regarding the whole subject?

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## CHAPTER II

### *More of the Cunning of Demons in Destroying and Polluting Mankind.*

THE people of our country, especially the peasants, have an old and pernicious custom. When one of them falls ill of some strange and unknown sickness, he at once sets about getting something to eat or drink from the house of the witch whom he suspects to have caused his sickness; and this he eats or drinks in the greatest confidence that it will restore him to health. Not a few have maintained that they have found a perfect cure by this means; and this is not denied by the witches who have been questioned with regard to the matter.

The Judge (at Chermesil, November 1584) asked Dominique Epvre with some curiosity whether there was any truth in the persistent rumours to this effect; and she answered that more than once it had come to her ears that those whom she had bewitched had recovered their health without her help or consent; and that when she expostulated with her Demon, who had promised that no one whom she had bewitched should recover without her consent, he had merely replied: "Are they not fools to purchase their health from you and



me, and to be so madly credulous as to owe it to our arts and powers?"

O crafty Arch-schemer, who so cunningly exploits man's feebleness to bring about his own downfall! For how could he cause a more complete wreck and ruin than by undermining a man's faith, by which alone he is brought near and reconciled to God, and by which alone he can ask and obtain from God all that he desires? When the demoniac's father asked Jesus to help him and his son, He answered: "If thou believe, I will help thee." Again, when the blind men prayed Him to restore their sight, He said: "According to your faith be it unto you" (S. Matthew, ix). And another time: "As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee" (S. Matthew viii). What is faith but the chain by which alone God's goodness to men is firmly secured? What is it but the covenant by which God receives us into His care and protection, and by which we in our turn entrust ourselves to His arms? What wonder, then, if Satan, the great rival of God and deadly hater of man, cannot endure such faith; and that he should have no greater care than to undermine and destroy it, and finally transfer it to none but himself. Many are the devices which he employs to this end; but none is so effective as when he imbues a man with hope of recovering the health which he has once lost. For who would refuse any condition to attain such a result? Therefore does Satan first send sicknesses and maladies (and, gracious God! what maladies! Not seldom they are such as to drive a man to fury and madness): then he shows a quick and easy way to their cure; namely, the eating of some food taken from the house of him who is conjectured to have caused the sickness. For who, being in such acute pain, will be so steadfast and firm as to reject so quick and seemingly gratuitous a remedy! Who would not embrace it as the greatest benefit, or think for a moment that there was any

guile or harm in it! But as Vergil has it, Eclogue III:

*"Frigidus,\* o pueri fugite hinc, latet anguis in herba."*

For in the first place he bids us put all our confidence and hope in that morsel of food, and thus turns us from the Creator to the creature, which is an intolerable blasphemy. Then he attributes the healing power of that morsel not to any inherent quality of its own, but to the fact that it has been either stolen or begged from the witch. And finally, which is most abominable of all, he drives us to the necessity of supplicating, beseeching, and even remunerating the very persons whom we know for a certainty to be the enemies and opponents of God and all mankind, in general, and to have stricken us in particular with an illness. It is as if we gave thanks to robbers because they have only robbed us, and have not also murdered us. And so we make witches even more vindictive and confident in wrongdoing, since they see that they are rewarded for their evil deeds. And finally we purchase a brief and uncertain bodily health at the price of sure and eternal damnation to our souls.

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### CHAPTER III

*That there is nothing which can so quickly and effectively induce Witches to remove an Evil Spell as Threats and Blows and Violence. But that no small Care must be taken lest a slight Evil be exchanged for a Greater, attended with even heavier Loss. The common Procedure in this Matter is declared; and it is disputed whether or not such forcible Extortion of a Cure can be practised without Mortal Hurt to his Soul who uses it.*

NEARLY all witches who have been questioned on the matter have confessed that, the more they are

\* "Frigidus." Vergil, Eclogue III, 93.

feared the more confidently do they do evil; whereas threats and the fear of imprisonment avail much to force them to remove their spells. This was fully and clearly admitted at Serre in December 1586 by Claude Morèle, who said that nothing so effectively compelled him to cure the ills which he had caused as the fear of arrest or the threat of blows or some violence. There was a certain man who, on account of his wide knowledge and experience, was admitted into the inner councils of our Most Serene Duke. I was talking with him of this matter, when in all seriousness he told me the following:—It had been told him that his little son had suddenly been taken sick, and that it was thought that a certain old woman had caused this by witchcraft. On hearing this, he first of all closely questioned the nurse, who had been carrying the child when the sickness attacked him. Then he considered and examined in every detail the nature of the sickness, whether or not it was one to which a child of that age would naturally be liable; and when he had decided beyond doubt that it could not have been caused except by some evil art or spell, he concluded, after weighing the whole matter very carefully in his mind, that there was nothing left for him to believe but that it was the old woman who had caused his son's sickness. He therefore summoned her to him, and when she was alone with him in the house spoke to her at first with much gentleness, asking her, if she knew of any remedy for the sickness, not to begrudge applying it, for she would not find him ungrateful. But when he saw that she began to be very voluble in her efforts to remove all suspicion from herself, and obstinately denied that she knew any remedies, he took up a cudgel which he had ready, and so belaboured her shoulders and flanks that she said she would do what he asked. She only asked a little time to get together what was required. This was at once granted,

and she was given permission to do what seemed good to her to the sick child; and very soon, by the application of certain matters, which were rather a blind to cover her witchcraft than of any virtue in themselves, she restored him to his former health.

My friend Antonius Blyenstem, Treasurer of the Province of Dommar-tin, once told me that the same thing had happened to one of his sons. "Childlike," he said, "the boy had wandered away from his mother and was playing about in church, when an old woman came by and stroked his head as if in blessing, and after wishing him well went out by the door. At once the boy's head drooped, he could hardly stand, and his crying made it clear that he was sick. When he was taken home and his sickness grew worse every hour, there was no doubt in the minds of all who had heard what had happened that it had been caused by that old woman, who was already suspected of many acts of witchcraft. Therefore she was forcibly brought to my house by some of the neighbours to undo the evil which she had done; and as soon as she was in the boy's presence she began to be afflicted in the same way as he; for her whole face went livid and she foamed at the mouth, so much to the spectator's horror that she seemed about to go mad. On the following night she asked to lie in the same bed with the boy, put her arms all about him and her mouth to his mouth, as if she meant to restore his health by her warmth and breath. And the women who were watching said that they heard about the boy a buzzing such as gadflies make in summer, until there disappeared from view a fragment of a Gospel text which had been sewn on to his pillow for an amulet; but they could not tell whether the witch or her Demon did this. But it was certain that the boy, who the day before had been thought at death's door, was perfectly well and strong by the dawn. Yet the witch did not labour for

nothing; for to repay herself for that good deed she shortly afterwards bewitched and killed the greater part of the cattle which were stabled at that house."

There are many points worthy of observation in this story. First, not even the holiness and sanctity of a church takes from witches the will and the power to do evil, unless God in His especial goodness forbids and prevents them. We have already given an example of this; where a witch during the sacred office fatally sprinkled with an asperge a girl whom she had been unable to injure in any other way. More than once we have seen the images of Saints broken and cast down in their shrines by lightning, believed to have been directed against them by some Demon. For nowhere do the Demons more love to perpetrate their iniquities than where their hideousness is enhanced and intensified by contempt.

Secondly, they like to disguise their malefactions under the pretext of a benediction. When Joab was about to slay Amasa with a sword, he embraced him in friendly fashion and said: "Art thou in health, my brother?" (II. Sam. xx. 9). And Judas (whom the harmonizers of the Old and New Testaments make Joab's parallel) saluted his Master with a kiss, which is the mark of the greatest friendship among the Jews, when he was about to deliver Him to be tortured and put to death by His executioners. It is, moreover, the custom of sorcerers to use in their charms and incantations holy images, solemn prayers, and even the ineffable Name of God Himself. Finally, it is no new thing, according to Aulus Gellius\*

\* "Gellius." "In libro Plinii Secundi *Naturalis Historiae* septimo legimus: esse quasdam in terra Africa familias hominum, uoce atque lingua effascinantium: qui si impensius forte laudauerint pulchras arbores, segetes lactiores, infantes amoeniores, egregios equos, pecudes pastu atque cultu opimas, emoriantur repente haec omnia, nulli aliae causae obnoxia."

(IX, 4) and Pliny (VII, 1), to find men who, by blessing and overmuch praising the trees and crops, lay a spell upon them and destroy them; and for this reason it was an ancient custom, says Aristotle, when a man was about to praise anything, to preface something in order to ward off any harm to that which was praised. So Vergil writes, Eclogue VII:

"If he shall overpraise him, bind  
valerian  
Round the young poet's brow, that  
evil speaking  
Do him no hurt."

Thirdly, it is to be observed that the benefit conferred by Demons (if it can rightly be called a benefit) is never solid and full and unadulterated; but always has to be paid for by its recipient with some even greater loss or misfortune. For no sooner have they driven a sickness from one man than they immediately transfer it to some other; and one man's safety is always purchased at the expense of another's destruction. S. Gregory of Tours, in his *Historia Francorum*, VI, 35, tells how this fact was exemplified by certain witches of Paris who, after having by their evil spell brought a mortal sickness upon the Prefect Mummol, could by no other means restore him to health than by winning his consent to the death of the two-year-old son of King Chilperic, who was his father's only and beloved heir to the kingdom. The historians of ancient times are full of examples of this transference of evils wrought by men steeped in devilish error. For instance, when Admetus was King at Pherae, Apollo obtained from the Fates a compact with Death that he should be spared if another could be found to die for him. And when a great chasm opened in the middle of the Forum† at Rome,

† "Forum." When a chasm gaped in the Forum at Rome in 362 B.C., the soothsayers announced it could only be filled by throwing into it the city's greatest treasure, whereupon a



an oracle pronounced that it would not close up until a youth of the highest hope had leaped into it. And here it is profitable to remark upon the wide difference between the fatherly goodness of God and the tyrannical cruelty and harshness of the Devil; for God turns the misfortunes of men to their own safety and salvation; whereas the Devil, whenever it lies in his power, turns their prosperity to sure calamity and destruction.

Fourthly, it should be noted that, with the greatest mockery and contempt, witches ape and copy the methods employed by Elisha, Elijah, S. Paul, and many of the Holy Fathers in recalling men to life; for they stretch themselves limb for limb upon the sick and embrace them with their whole body. I have already stated at some length that Satan is the greatest copier and imitator of the works of God.

And lastly, the Demon pretends a horror and terror of parchments inscribed with sacred names or characters, charms, phylacteries, and such talismans and periapts, which men commonly wear as a protection against evil enchantments. But it must not be thought that this is because such things are any impediment to him; for in nearly all their spells and impostures and cures he teaches his subjects to use such things in order to create a greater impression of well-doing, and more especially to fix the attention of the ignorant upon such things, so that he may confirm and establish them in their debased beliefs and that, neglecting far more salutary remedies, they may place their whole hope of safety in such trifles. For if

(to quote S. John Chrysostom, *Homel. 73 in Matthew*) the Gospel preached from a pulpit has not benefited a man's soul, what profit to his body can he look for from fragments written on pieces of parchment? Wherein, I ask, lies the virtue of the Gospel? In the form and characters of its letters, or in its sense and meaning? Therefore it is all one to the Demons if a man always bears such things about his neck, if he has not their meaning fixed and implanted in his soul.

But let us now return to our interrupted narrative. Nicolaea Stephana, who was a subject of the Premonstratensian Abbey of Saint-Paul-de-Verdun, was engaged in December 1587, for pay, to rid the castle of Dommartin from a plague which was infesting it (for she used to earn a living by such means), and she did her work very promptly and thoroughly. But when the necessary interval had elapsed and there was no longer any fear of the plague again breaking out, and she had been paid her money and given leave to depart, she was sorry to have to leave so good and generous a way of living sooner than she had expected, and decided to find some means of delaying her departure; and thought that her best plan would be to bring some sickness upon the Castellan's wife, since she had been so precipitate in dismissing her. So she at once decided to afflict her with some illness, so that she would again be hired to stay and heal it. She accordingly went forthwith to the woman's bedroom and, standing at the door, said: "Look, your stay-laces are undone! Let me tie them for you." And, while doing her this apparent service, she cleverly shook down the back of her neck some poison powder which she had in her hand. At once the woman was seized with a violent trembling of her limbs, such as occurs at the onset of a high fever; and soon she was afflicted with such pain in the feet that her toes were hideously twisted round to her heels. When all this was

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*gallant youth, Mettus or Mettius Curtius, in full armour, mounted his steed and leaped into the abyss, which incontinently closed over him. Varro says that the spot was blasted by lightning in 445 B.C. and was enclosed by Curtius, one of the consuls for that year, whence the legend had its origin.*

seen and understood by the servants, the witch was seized and kept under observation, and finally terrified by threats of a beating and the assurance that she would not be liberated until she had restored to health their mistress whom she had bewitched. For the suspicion that she was a witch was enhanced by the fact that they had heard her say that, whatever skill she had in averting or preventing the plague, she had learned from one Matthieu Amants, who had not long before been sentenced for witchcraft, and that as the price of her learning she had been defiled by him and made pregnant. At first she loudly protested that they were doing her a grievous wrong to abuse her so after she had done them so great a service, and even threatened to hang herself; but when she saw that they remained just as firm in their purpose and that she could get no good that way, she changed her tactics and her tone, and asked them, since they insisted upon her curing their mistress, to give her time to think whether she had ever heard tell of any remedy for that sickness. After a little she returned and said that she had found something upon which they could confidently rely for the cure they desired; for she knew of a herb which, if bruised in the sufferer's bath, would infallibly heal her; only she prayed them not to be disturbed if some little time elapsed before the cure was complete, since the sickness was not such as could easily be remedied. Meanwhile the witch's son, who was with her there, seeing how his mother had been treated, feared the like for himself, since he knew that he was her associate, and at the dead of night let himself down by a rope from the battlements of the castle wall; but the next day he was caught and brought back and, being bidden to tell why he had so secretly made his escape, told the whole story as it has been set down here; adding that he himself had been the prime instigator of his mother and

had urged her to take this course when she was seeking for an excuse to prolong her stay in the castle; and he said further that there was no remedial virtue in all those lotions which she was so assiduously applying to the sick woman, but that they were merely a pretext to make it appear that the cure had been effected by natural means; for from the very moment that they had threatened to beat her she had secretly administered an antidote, but had not been able to prevent the sickness from continuing for its allotted time. Let them wait until two weeks to the hour had passed from the time of the onset of the sickness; for then without doubt the sick woman would recover and be freed from all pain; feeling nothing worse than a weariness of the limbs. And this prediction was not falsified, for at the very time which he had named the pain was assuaged. But on the following night it returned with even greater violence; for, as it was afterwards discovered, the witch had repented of having cured her because she saw that by doing so she had provided an opportunity for bringing a charge of witchcraft against herself, together with indisputable evidence of the fact; for it has already been shown that such sicknesses can hardly be cured or assuaged except by the witch who caused them; and for this reason she repeated and renewed the poison. When, therefore, on the next day they charged her son with the falsity of his prediction, he cursed much under his breath, but would only say that they must beat his mother unmercifully, for that was the only remedy for her subterfuges. So she was seized, and two brawny peasants did not cease to hammer and kick and pound and shake her, and finally to drag her to the fire, until she gave her promise to heal the sick woman at that very hour. And this promise she fulfilled, giving her to eat an apple which she had in full view drugged with a white powder. Thus at last she was given

leave to depart as she had before been promised, and fell into the hands of the officers of justice who were waiting for her at the castle gate. By these, at the command of the Judge who had inquired into her life and behaviour, she was arrested and thrown into prison, where she soon confessed everything that we have here narrated; and at last she and her son were burned together in the fire.

There are two chief lessons which we can learn from this story. First, that the remedies applied by witches for the sicknesses they have caused have no curative power in themselves, but are a mere cover to the spells which, from fear of the law's severity, they dare not use openly. Thus they use herbs and unguents and lotions and other things of every-day use, in which there is no particular medicinal value. Or else it is their deliberate purpose to steep men's minds in superstition; as when they persuade them to undertake with specious piety votive pilgrimages, nine days' devotions, lustrations, offerings, and other such exercises as are daily used by Christians. Or, finally, their intention is to undermine and destroy the faith and trust which we should place in God alone, by causing us to transfer it to some article of food or drink stolen from the witch's house, and by eating which we trust to be recovered from the illness with which we are suffering. For these beldams willingly permit this to be done, even to the extent of great damage to their household, so long as they can implant in the common mind the base notion that they have at their command, as it were from an apothecary's workshop, an infallible cure for their diseases. Nay (as Pliny the Younger says), they thus claim to have control over the Gods in their own houses, so that they alone are able to help and protect the rest of the human race.

Secondly, we must not neglect to note how this story exemplifies the truth that the Demon's hands are so

tenacious that he does not easily allow anything to be taken from him which he has once laid hold of. Therefore, if at the request of his disciples he has afflicted anyone with a disease, it usually happens that this must be exchanged for an even worse sickness, as has already been said; or its cure and easement must be delayed till a certain time which cannot be anticipated, however much the witch may beseech him to do so. Thus there must always remain something which the Demon can count as his gain. But let us proceed with the relation of other examples.

Stephan Noach of Castel-nuit (July 1586) for three years continuously was so sick that it wanted little to drive him mad. Being, therefore, despaired by all, and having tried in vain every remedy which the skill of his physicians could suggest, he at last thought of approaching a fortune-teller. There was at that time at Cranville one who was pre-eminently famous in that art, and to him in person he told his whole trouble. The fortune-teller said that the sickness had been brought upon him by the woman whom he would find talking to his wife on his return home; and that he must weave a chain of pliant twigs and throw it over her neck as soon as he came into her presence, and fiercely threaten to strangle her at once unless she immediately restored him to health. Accordingly, he came home and found sitting with his wife by the hearth an old woman named Pariseta of Neuville, and, as he had been told, terrified her by word and deed as much as he could. She then fell before his knees and begged him to pardon her, and promised for sure that she would heal him completely from all his infirmity if he would but do what she told him to do. This was, first that he should make no difficulty about eating a pear which she would give him; for although at first it would seem to be as hard as stone, yet after he had rubbed it a



little in his hands it would become as soft as if it had been thoroughly well cooked. Then he must go straight to bed; for his sickness would then attack him violently, even to the point of death; and therefore he must call in two picked matrons from the neighbourhood to keep watch over him that night. The vile woman meant to protect herself by the presence of these two women, in case she were accused of witchcraft when so long and grave an illness should be so easily and quickly cured; for it was by no means her intention to do openly that which she was to do. Noach declared that he would refuse no condition as long as he could be cured of his terrible disease. But when he took the pear, at first he could not get his teeth into it, for it was plainly made of iron; but even as he was saying so, and in the meantime rubbing it a little with his hands, he found to his surprise that it had become as soft as wool. He ate it (and it was most nauseous to the taste), and at once felt such a burning heat in his belly that red-hot coals could hardly have caused him greater agony. He was hurried into bed, to all appearance breathing his last: his anxious wife brought two matrons to watch over him with her that night, to whom the witch voluntarily joined herself as the third, with a countenance so composed to grief that her false tears might easily have been taken for those of his wife. They kept careful watch up to midnight, when the witch, like another Mercury,\* secretly dusted her companions with a powder of forgetfulness

\* "Mercury." So of Mercury sent forth by Jupiter, Vergil, *Æneid*, IV, 242-45: "Tum uirgam caput: hac animas ille euocat Orco palentes, alias sub Tartara tristia mittit, dat somnosque adimitque, et lumina morte resignat."

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so that they sank into a profound sleep. Then she took the sick man upon her shoulder and carried him into the garden, where she placed him upon an enormous bear which appeared there. Then the bear kept carrying him up and down and to and fro, all the time groaning as if it were being weighed down by too great a burden; but in reality it was the voice of the Demon, complaining because he was being forced against his nature to use his power for granting the man the great benefit of the restoration of his health. But the witch chid him for his tardiness, and more and more insistently urged him to accomplish his journey, saying: "Come on now, lazy and hateful beast! Now you are getting your deserts, you who so long ago compelled me against my will to afflict this man." The panic-stricken rider afterwards with the greatest confidence bore witness that he had heard these words. Meanwhile the women who were watching in the bedroom awoke, and finding it empty hurriedly searched and examined the whole house to see if they could find the missing man; and when they at last found him in the garden alone with the witch, they asked why he had gone away like that without telling them, naked and unaccompanied. The witch took care to answer first, saying: "Can you not see that I brought him here to empty his bowels?" But they did not stop to bandy words with her, their only care being to take the man up and get him back to bed as quickly as possible; yet all of them together could hardly manage this by putting forth their every effort, whereas the witch had easily carried him out by herself. Now whereas the chief condition of their agreement had been that Noach, after he had performed all the above, should be entirely cured of his disease, yet there still remained no little pain. The witch attributed this to the untimely arrival of those women, by which she had been prevented from

leave to depart as she had before been promised, and fell into the hands of the officers of justice who were waiting for her at the castle gate. By these, at the command of the Judge who had inquired into her life and behaviour, she was arrested and thrown into prison, where she soon confessed everything that we have here narrated; and at last she and her son were burned together in the fire.

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carrying her well-begun work to a successful conclusion; but she said that the sickness would last for another eight days at the most, after which his health would be completely restored without any further disappointment. And so it proved. Being apprehended on the clear evidence of this and many other crimes, she was at last put in prison; but, through the carelessness of her wardresses, she broke gaol and escaped.

In this tale also there are points not unworthy of the reader's attention. First, that among Christian men of our day soothsayers confidently and with impunity live and practise their art; although all men whose souls have been imbued with a knowledge of the true God have banished them from the society of men. Moses (*Levit.* xx. 6 and *Deut.* xviii. 11), Saul (*1 Sam.* xxviii. 3) and Josiah (*11. Kings* xxiii. 24) pronounced the extreme penalty against those under their authority who were found to be soothsayers. Constantine (I, 3, *de Malefic. C.*) commanded that they who consulted with them should be banished; and Constantius and Julian (I, *Nemo auspicem*) that they should be put to the sword. At the Councils of Ancyra\* (cap. 24), Toledo† (cap. 28) and Orleans‡ (cap. 32), among many others, the Holy Fathers decreed that they were to be exterminated from the confines to Christendom. And it has been finally agreed by all Christians that these men are not to be endured in the Church; and especially do they execrate and call down curses upon those of them who hold their meetings on Sundays. Yet do Kings and Princes daily consort with such men and summon them to them for no small hire; and the common people, more confident to sin with

such authority, follow their example. For they consult with those who, by turning a sieve§ or a key, discover the whereabouts of that which has been stolen or lost; who immerse in holy water parchments upon which are written the names of those who are suspected of theft; who practise the protraction or contraction of napkins, and use other such damnable arts as could not be equalled by the impiety of all the men of old times with their pyromancy, aeromancy, hydromancy and geomancy. Then those bands of thieves who, under the false name of Egyptians, roam over the greater part of Europe, stealing as if by licence, in no way show themselves more plausible than when they pretend to foretell for the ignorant masses what fortune is in store for them. Here I will make no more than a passing reference to far more abominable soothsayers than that one of Cranville; such as the monk in Niderhau, the woman at the Hot Springs near Mirecour, the discharged soldier at Nancy, and many others who publicly and in security make a living by this practice.

The story goes on to the effect that it was necessary to twist that chain of pliant withs to throw over the witch's neck. It is a common belief that there is nothing so effective to beat witches with as a cudgel cut from a vine; but it is not easy to find any reason for this, if indeed it is true; and the commentators on Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* XIV), Livy (*In Flori compendio*), Plutarch

\* "Ancyra." The proclamation of this Council as found in the provisions of the Canon *Episcopi*, circa 900.

† "Toledo." The Councils of 633 and 693.

‡ "Orleans." The Council of 533.

§ "Sieve." In the "Opera Omnia" of Cornelius Agrippa, Lyons (no date), Vol. II, chapter xxi, being a portion of a treatise attributed to Pietro d'Apone, will be found full directions how to turn the sieve, with an engraving. The riddle is supported by scissors or pincers which two persons sustain with their middle fingers. A conjuration is uttered, and the instrument turns. It is necessary to name the suspects, and when the name of the guilty party is spoken the sieve stops immediately in its oscillations.

(*In Galba*), Vegetius Renatus\* (*Lib. II. De re militari*) and Spartianus† (*In Adriani uita*), are still faced with the same difficulty when they try to discover the reason why to be beaten with a vine cudgel was a privileged punishment reserved for soldiers who were Roman citizens, and why the centurions bore a vine staff as the sign and symbol of their office. The legionary in Apuleius (*De Asin. Aur. Lib. 9*) was, I think, lying with the usual boldness of his kind when he said that the centurion had found outside the camp a gardener on the road and, infuriated at his silence in answer to his questions had knocked him off his ass with the vine wand which he carried in his hand, and then, turning it round, had split his head open with the larger end of it. And yet there must be something in this which, as we read in Josephus of Eleazar's ring‡ and Solomon's

\* "Renatus." Flavius Vegetius Renatus, the author of a treatise "*Epitoma Rei Militaris*," which was probably written early in the fifth century. The materials being uncritically derived from many writers of different epochs, the result is that usages of varying periods are indiscriminately mixed, and it has even been suspected that the writer drew upon his imagination. Edited by C. Lang, Leipzig, 1885.

† "Spartianus." The passage to which reference is made describes the reforms of Hadrian in military matters: "*nulli uitem, nisi robusto et Bonae famae daret*" Upon this Casaubon and Salmasius have very ample notes which may be consulted with profit. The former glosses: "*De uite centurionum omnia protrita: illud tamen, quod sciam, explicauit adhuc nemo: cur ut diuersa ponantur hic a Spartiano haec duo: uitem dare, et facere centurionem. Ratio autem est: quia datio uitae, quasi designatio fuit ad centurionatum: qui tunc postea obibatur, cum erat aliquis uacuefactus locus morte unius centurionum, aut missione, uel regradatione. Cum erant plures uite donati, promouebatur is qui erat gradu propior, aut qui esset antiquior eius loci candidatus: Nisi qui hunc proxime impellebat, causam diceret, cur ille prior expelleretur.*"

‡ "Eleazar's ring." See "*The History of Witchcraft*," Chapter V, pp. 194-5. Eleazar (or Eliazar) was an exorcist, whom, in the

grass, has some notable effect upon the Demon and those whom he has once bound to himself. For it is told of the Emperor Trajan that, when he sent a written message to the oracle of Jupiter at Heliopolis to know whether, after his war with the Parthians, he would return to Rome, the Demon replied that he must bring into his temple a vine wand split into two and covered with a handkerchief, and take it out again on the day after the morrow. And although in this case it seems to be more concerned with military questions and auguries, yet it suggests that there is in the wood of the vine some peculiar quality which is lacking in other woods. This was observed by Euphorion,§ who said that formerly it was not lawful to make an image of Rhea Dea except from vine wood; and rightly so; for, as Suidas testifies, she was otherwise known as Cybele, that is (according to Festus), the Goddess who drives men to frenzy; and the Greeks had a word *κυβισσάν*, meaning to turn head over heels; and her priests when performing her rites used to roll their heads about,

"Nodding|| their heads to shake their horrid plumes."

And we have already told how this is also done by witches when they are frenzied in their dances. The Egyptians believed that the vine grew from the seed of giants' blood, because wine

presence of the Emperor Vespasian, Josephus actually saw casting out devils. The operator applied to the nose of the possessed a ring having attached to it a root which Solomon is said to have prescribed; "*Baaras*" (Solomon's grass), a herb of magical properties.

§ "Euphorion." Of Chalcis in Euboea. An eminent grammarian and poet, born about 274 B.C. He was appointed librarian to Antiochus the Great, 221. Of his writings, fragments remain which were collected by Meineke in "*Analecta Alexandrina*," Berlin, 1848.

|| "Nodding." Lucretius, II, 632:

"*terrificas caput quatientes numine cristas.*"

often makes men mad. Moses and David speak figuratively of the grape, meaning the blood. Orpheus\* said that it was unlawful to sow the vine when the moon was entering the sign of *Virgo*, as if there was little accordance between Bacchic fury and virginal modesty. And Pythagoras forbade the offering to the Gods of anything from vines which had not been cut. Finally, it cannot be without some reason that we are told that, when Samson was mocking the importunate and treacherous pleas of Delilah, he told her that he would be no stronger than other men if he were bound with seven green withes of the vine. Pliny (XXIX, 4) also says that cockerels will not crow if a chain made from vine twigs be hung about their necks. For ages past, then, there has been in the vine some property other than that given to it by nature; and all this goes to show that we must admit that there lurk in it the seeds of many abominations, not only by reason of its innate power to overset a man's reason, by which wine becomes the conqueror of him who drinks it—

"Bacchus† paved the way to crime,  
'twas he  
Who brought oblivion to the raging  
Centaur's."

But also, as is apparent from what we have just said, by reason of the use to which it is put in the magic arts.

The story then proceeds to tell that, before he could be restored to health, Noach had to sit upon a bear; that is, he had to put his faith in the power of the Demon who was disguised as

\* "Orpheus." *The Orphic apocrypha* were edited by Hermann in 1805; and had been previously collected by Gesner, 1764.

† "Bacchus." "Georgics," II, 455-6:

"Bacchus et ad culpam causas dedit: ille  
furentes  
Centavros letho domuit."

The reference is to the drunken brawl between the Centaurs and Lapithae at the nuptials of King Pirithous.

the bear which carried him. For it is the Demon's chief aim, when he wishes to corrupt us, that we should put the greatest confidence in him, and there is always something of this purpose in all his schemes, so that he may turn us from the Creator to the creature and plunge us more deeply into earthly thoughts. It is in connection with this that we see tumblers and strolling jugglers always leading bears with them, upon which, for a fee, they place children in order, forsooth, that they may thereafter be more secure from the fear of hobgoblins and spectres. We have already mentioned many such ridiculous practices, and in the following chapter we shall deal with them in more detail and at greater length.

But before we begin this task and put an end to this question, it is worth while here to touch upon a matter which has been dealt with by many authors: whether or not it is possible, without mortal hurt to the soul, to beg and petition witches in this way to heal our infirmities. Possibly it will be said that any argument about this question is superfluous after the clear verdict of so many of the older Theologians, including S. Thomas and S. Bonaventura, supported by that of more recent authorities who cannot be disregarded; but I have never been persuaded that their utterances are so inspired as to admit of no discussion. For it makes a great difference whether you take or obtain anything from another by force or by supplication: in one case you show contempt and disdain; in the other, admiration, obedience, and a humble and submissive spirit of pleading. If a man begs or bribes a witch to obtain from her Little Master a cure for the sickness from which he is suffering, then I think that he does no less than as a suppliant reverently to implore the Demon for help, to ask to be bound to him by a benefit received, to worship him with an offering, and therefore to confess that he will be subject to



him. Therefore every torment, and even death itself, should be endured before we allow ourselves to be led into so horrible a sacrilege. The Holy Scriptures proclaim aloud that God alone is to be worshipped and adored; for He is a jealous God, who will not suffer the glory and honour which is due to Him to be paid to another (*Deut. vi. 4; S. Matthew xxii. 37*). And this, I think, is what those Theologians so sternly rebuke and condemn. For when the Emperor Constantine legislated on this matter (*In l. Nullus de Malef. et Math.*), he clearly showed that the atrocity of the crime consisted in the pleadings and the gifts with which soothsayers were approached. And Photius in the *Nomocanon*\* says that the penalty of that law should only be incurred when these consultations are accompanied with offerings and sacrilegious sacrifices.

But all these conditions are observed by the witches of our day. For first they desire to be entreated, and often even bribed with gifts; then they declare that the honour of one of the Saints has been insulted and violated, and that therefore he must be appeased by a votive pilgrimage to his shrine and by gifts and nine days' sacrifices. What, in fact, it comes to is that you redeem your health by worshipping and offering gifts to the Demon who in the first place injured it; and the witches speciously give the

Demon the name of a Saint so that they may hide their sacrilege under some appearance of religion. This method of obtaining remedy for disease is, then, entirely inexcusable, and cannot be defended even on the score of the weakness of the flesh and man's natural eagerness and desire for the restoration of his health; for men should always look for such help from their religion, the sanctity of which is in this case openly besmirched, befouled and violated.

But if you use threats against a witch whom you justly suspect of having cast a spell upon you; if, when threats do not move her, you resort to blows; if you compel her willy-nilly to remove the spell; where, I ask, is any currying of favour? What pleading or beseeching or veneration can there be in such behaviour? How does the matter stand when the effect upon the witch must be to make her bemoan the fact that she has been despised and driven to bring help to the very man whom she has injured, rather than to give her cause to boast of having gained some favour or pleasure or advantage? What if her Demon must confess that he has been, so to speak, seized by the scruff of his neck and forced to repair the wrong, and that he has lost his prey and been put to flight, mocked, derided, and thought of no account? If a man pursues a thief and wrests back from him what he has stolen, how can he be said to have done the thief any favour? If a captain wins back a citadel and thrusts out the enemy who has occupied it, what is there left for the enemy but to collect his baggage if he can and take his way elsewhere in shame and grief, mourning and bewailing that he has justly been cast out from the stronghold which he had possessed? And when a man has taken and held something, but is compelled to let go of it because it has shaken itself free, or has uttered threats against him, or has attacked him with a sword or some other violence, what does he reap

\* "*Nomocanon*." A collection of ecclesiastical law, the elements of which are compiled from secular and canon law. The Greek Church has two such principal collections. The first, dating from the end of the sixth century, is ascribed to John Scholasticus, whose collection it amplifies and completes. The second is ascribed to Photius, and forms a "*Corpus Iuris*" of the Orthodox communion. Photius, the chief author of the great schism between West and East, was born at Constantinople circa 815, and died in February 897. But the "*Nomocanon*" of Photius is hardly more than a revision of the earlier collection, probably made by the Patriarch's orders.

from his seizure of it but regret for having lost it? In what respect does a man so bound demean himself, if in spite of him who bound him he liberates himself and regains his freedom?

Nevertheless, I unhesitatingly agree with Abdias, Bishop of Babylon, that the cures apparently wrought by witches are not due to the application of any effective remedy, but merely result from the witch's ceasing from active torment of the sufferer; and I am chiefly convinced of this by the fact that such cures are often effected in a moment without the use of any medicine, for such a rapid change from sickness to health cannot seem at all probable. Therefore, if a man confidently and boldly, being clear in his conscience and trusting in the help of God, by threats or violence compels Satan, represented by a witch, to abstain from injury and magic spells, and to cease and refrain from doing hurt, and to depart from his body (for Iamblichus believed that this sort of sickness was nothing but the presence of a Demon in the body), how, I ask, does he act in any way differently from the Exorcists who bind demoniacs with chains and beat them and terrify them? But, you will say, it is not so much in this that they place their hope of saving them, but far rather in the potent words of the Holy Scriptures which they use in their prescribed forms and with the ceremonies ordained. Yet I maintain that, in the case of those others also, their strength and energy are born of their faith in God through JESUS CHRIST; for they must have abundant faith who thus dare to curse, threaten and beat witches, who are feared by nearly all men. If it were not so there would be a danger that such provocation would but the more incense the witch and cause her to spit forth her venom with the more licence and contempt against the man who had thus enraged her.

In any case, even if they who

forcibly extort a cure from a witch are not entirely free from guilt, perhaps because of the mere fact that a witch must necessarily be concerned in any such cure, and (as someone will point out) there is an unavoidable smack of sacrilege in such a proceeding: yet it must certainly be admitted that such behaviour is free from that compact and bargaining with Demons which so arouses God's wrath against men, and that such men are not actuated by any evil intention or conscious of any sacrilegious blasphemy; and finally, that they do not incur the penalties laid down both in sacred (*Levit. xix. and xx; Deut. xviii*) and in human law (*1 Nullus aruspex et 1 Nemo de malef. et Math.*) for those who turn after sorcerers and seek their advice and consult with them, or in any way set them up as their helpers.



#### CHAPTER IV

*That the Cures of Demons are always disguised under some Appearance of Religion; and that they are often effected through the Agency of some Man in High Position, that they may acquire even Greater Authority. But that the Demons at times betray their Baseness by the use of Foul and Obscene Matters in their Cures.*

SATAN very astutely backs his sorceries with the seeming force of religion; for thus he more easily leads into superstitious error the minds of those whom he knows to be prone to his worship; and, moreover, he transfers from his disciples the suspicion of having caused the prodigious cures which are wrought by his help, so that it may not seem that, because they are to be thanked for the cure, therefore it was also they who in the first place caused the disease. Therefore the responsibility for the evil must be put upon one of the Saints, who has been

angered to the point of revenge by the neglect of his worship:

"For their wrath is inflamed in the souls of the saints."

It follows then that his wrath must be averted; but, good God! with what expiations and propitiations! Certainly they would have shamed the votaries of the most ridiculous and fantastic cults of remotest antiquity. That you may wonder all the more, gentle reader, I have thought it worth while to illustrate this by one or two examples taken from my store.

There was at Nancy within the last ten years a witch named Thenotte, who was once asked to heal a neighbouring woman of the sickness from which she was suffering (for she was much sought after for such work, like those whom the Spaniards call "Deliverers"). She then declared that the disease had been sent by S. Fiacre,\* who must therefore be propitiated with gifts and a pilgrimage, which, if they liked, she would herself gladly undertake to perform. When the price of her services had been settled, she first measured the sick woman crosswise with a piece of waxed linen, and then folded the linen a certain number of times and placed it in her bosom as if for safety. For the whole of the following night she kept watch before the door of the sick woman's house, and at the break of day set out on her way without ever uttering a word. When she came to the shrine of S. Fiacre she

\* "S. Fiacre." Abbot in Ireland; died August 18, 670. He long dwelt in a hermitage on the banks of the Nore, of which the memory is preserved in Kilfiachra (Kilfera), Kilkenny. S. Fiacre migrated to France and built an oratory at Brogillum (Breuil), where his shrine is yet a place of pilgrimage. During his life he healed all manner of diseases, and numberless cures are wrought at his tomb. His shrine was removed in 1568 to the Cathedral at Meaux for safety from the violence and destruction of the Calvinists, and precious Relics have been distributed to other sanctuaries. Feast, 30 August.

entered and set fire to the linen, and with the wax that dropped from it traced figures in the form of a cross on the steps of the High Altar; and then went out and walked three times round the chapel, the linen meanwhile giving out spluttering and violet coloured flames.

"Round that which was to purge, the learned priest

Waved with due rites the lustral torch, whose light

Burned blue with sulphurous stench and tarry smoke."†

And having performed all this, she returned to the town.

Notice how in the performance of her so-called religious expiation she made use of silence, measurements, watching, murmurings, figures and fire. This is certainly a most manifest imitation of the soothsayers of olden pagan times, who (as S. Augustine says) used to utter their abominable prayers around their idols' altars together with horrible sacrifices. But by far the most intolerable aspect of these cures is the fact that they often make use of filth, sordid matters, excrements, and many other such things than which nothing could be imagined more foreign to that purity which ought always to be an accompaniment of divine worship and ceremonies.

To this kind belongs the following story of a peasant from the Vosges whose name was Didier Finance, at Saint-Dié, July 1581. This man was immoderately eager to avenge himself upon his fellow-townsmen Valentine Valère, with whom he had long been at enmity; but he had not yet been able to find any safe and convenient opportunity for venting his spite. However, the chance he was waiting for

† "Smoke." Claudian, "De VI Cons. Hon." 324-6.

"Lustralem sic rite facem, cui lumen odorum sulfure caeruleo nigroque bitumine fumat, circum membra rotat doctus purganda sacerdos."



presented itself as Valentine was riding on his way alone in a lonely spot; for as he came to a rather dark place, something like a shadow ran out and pulled him from his horse with such violence that he was disabled in one leg. But some time later Didier took pity on the man, seeing him suffer for so long, and going to him as if on some other business, asked him how he had come by that accident. Having been told at great length what he already knew far better than the other, he promised him a sure and quick cure as long as he would do what he told him. His fellow-peasant answered that there was nothing he would not do for that, and eagerly waited to hear what he must do. Then Didier told him to go and beg from nine different stables enough horse-dung to fill the boot which he had been wearing on his leg when he fell, and to take it as an offering to S. Benedict, to whom there was a famous shrine in Berquel, a town in Germany; for by this means his limb would by some occult virtue be made sound again. But it was afterwards learned from him that he did not give this advice in the belief that it would be of any help in effecting the cure, but simply to hide his magic art under that fiction. For it is the custom of witches to conceal their remedies under the cloak of such religious expiations; whereas in truth they have no part at all with religion, but rather hold it altogether in scorn and contempt.

It was in this way that Apollonius once defended himself before the Emperor Domitian against a charge of sorcery brought against him because he had stamped out the plague which had infested the Ephesians; for he said that he had obtained that boon by praying to Hercules. And for that reason a temple was dedicated to the god in the name of the Averter, Ἀποτρόπαιος (Philost. *De Vita*, VIII, 7).

But sometimes they throw off all pretence of religion, and set to work in

other and utterly absurd ways, presumably with the purpose of bringing men into even greater ridicule. So it was in the story told by Herodotus (Lib. II) of a certain Pharaoh who was struck blind for his impiety, because during the flooding of the Nile he took a dart and threw it into the midst of the swirling waters. Eleven years later he was told by an oracle to bathe his eyes in the urine of a woman who had suffered only one man, and he would regain his sight. What collyrium can there be in a woman's urine potent enough to restore sight to the eyes? And why should it be more efficacious coming from a woman who has suffered only one man, than from one who has suffered many? It is nothing but the craft and guile, the impostures and deceits by which Satan leads men's minds into error so that he may propagate, establish and confirm his dominion over them; for that is the one goal to which all his actions are aimed and directed.

And to give more weight and authority to his actions, he very often performs them through the agency of Kings and Emperors. Thus it is told of Pyrrhus that he used to heal sufferers from the spleen by touching them with his right foot as they lay prone. Then there is a story of Vespasian\*

\* "Vespasian." The account of the poor man who was blind and another who was lame presenting themselves before the tribunal of Vespasian and imploring him to heal them, declaring that the god Serapis had appeared to them in a dream and admonished them to seek the Emperor, who would restore them to health, is to be found in Suetonius, "Vespasianus," VII. The historian says that Vespasian hesitated, but at length made the essay and both the blind and lame were healed. Tacitus gives an even fuller account of the miracles of Vespasian, and particularly emphasizes these two cures, adding: "Utrumque, qui interfuerunt, nunc quoque memorant, postquam nullum mendaciorum pretio." "Historiarum," Liber IV, 81. Hume, in his "Essay on Miracles," selects this incident as an example of successful imposture, but he has been completely answered by Paley in

which, since it contains much that is worthy of observation in relation to our argument, I have not hesitated to transcribe in full from Suetonius, Tacitus, Sabellicus (*Ennead*, III, 7)\* and other writers of no mean order. The Emperor was sitting at his tribunal at Alexandria waiting for the days of the hot winds to pass, when two men of the common people came to him asking for the help which had been indicated to them by Serapis. One of these men was blind, and the other had a withered hand; and they said that they had been told in a dream that the blind man would see the light if Vespasian anointed his eyes with his spittle, and the other man's hand would be made whole if he were touched by his heel. It was hardly believed that this could be so, and at first Vespasian did not dare to put it to the proof; but his friends urged upon him that if the cure were accomplished it would redound to the glory of Cæsar, and if not it would only make the two men ridiculous; so he made the experiment in both particulars before the whole assembly. And the result was that one man had the use of his hand restored, and the other again rejoiced in the light of day. The truth was that the Demon whom Egypt, the Mother of errors, worshipped under the name of Serapis, was afraid lest he should be ousted from his old seat by the Church

his "Evidences of Christianity." The commentators on Suetonius and Paley agree that the affair was a juggle between the Egyptian priests, the patients and, perhaps, the Emperor. If this were not the case it may well be, as Tertullian thought, and as Boguet well suggests in "An Examen of Witches," XXXV, a diabolic counterfeit.

\* "Sabellicus." Marcus Antonius Cocceius Sabellicus, a Venetian writer of eminence. He is the author of "Epistolarum libri XII"; "Orationum libri XII"; "De situ Uenetae libri tres"; and many poems, of which some are devotional, such as "De laudibus Deiparae Uirginis Elegiae XII." I have used the collected edition of his "Opera," Venice (December 23), 1502.

of the faithful which had recently been established there; afflicted those two men each with his own disability, and sent them both to ask help from Vespasian, so that by owing their cure to his favour who was Emperor of the world the credit and authority of the oracle should be enhanced; and so that he, from the height of his throne, might not turn his mind to the radiance of the true light.

Maximus Marius† and Aelius Spartianus‡ tell a similar story of the Emperor Hadrian. A certain woman had been deprived of her sight by some supernatural power because she had neglected to obey an oracle which had told her to go to the Emperor, who was in a state of impatience bordering upon despair because of his sickness, and tell him that he might spare himself his anxiety, for he would shortly recover from his disease. And when she was again warned in a dream to do this, and in addition was given hope of the recovery of her sight, having learned discretion from her punishment she carefully and meticulously performed her task. And so the sight of her eyes was restored whole to her,

† "Marius." Actually the work of this Roman historian, who lived about A.D. 165-230, has perished. He wrote a continuation of the biographies of Roman Emperors from Nerva to Heliogabalus to follow the work of Suetonius. Marius Maximus is much utilized by the "Historiae Augustae Scriptores."

‡ "Spartianus." This historian relates the tale, "Adrianus Caesar," XXV, and adds that the Emperor was cured of his fever. He also says that a blind man from Pannonia on another occasion when Adrian was sick came and touched the Emperor, "et ipse oculos recepit et Adrianum febris reliquit, quamvis Marius Maximus haec per simulationem facta commemoret." Upon which Salmasius glosses: "Ita uocasse Marium incantationes et alia remedia magica, quae ad morbum Adriani leuandum adhibita, scribit Dio, nullo modo adduci possum ut credam. Scio simulatrices ueteribus appellatas esse sagas, et incantatrices aniculas, et multa in sacris magicis per simulationem fieri solita."

after she had, in obedience to the same warning, kissed the Emperor's knees. For the spice of the story lies in that last condition.



### CHAPTER V

*That there are many Obstacles which are admitted by Witches to hinder them from Curing the Ills which they have brought upon Others. And what these are is declared by Relevant Examples and Theories.*

THE way to injury and loss is always easy, whereas the road to well-being and safety is beset with every kind of difficulty and obstacle. Similarly, when witches desire to cause sickness or death everything is ready to their hand; for they have the opportunity, every sort of poison, curse, charms and spells, and the Demon himself, the deviser and author of all evil, who never fails them when they summon him; but when it is a question of healing a sickness or saving a life, then there is always something to hinder them. For instance, help has already been sought from the priest or the physician or some other source; the sickness was not caused by the witch in question, but by another; as soon as they are put in prison they are entirely deprived of the healing power which they had before from the Demon; they are only permitted to heal on condition that they exchange that benefit for an even greater loss or injury; they have not been clearly asked in so many words to effect a cure. Such are among the excuses which they always offer for their delays and subterfuges in the matter of healing. The following examples will make this clearer.

Roses Girardine, at Essey, Nov. 1586, asserted for a fact that no disease could be cured except by the witch who had caused it; for none of them was allowed to thrust her sickle into another's corn. Thus the evil is

to be feared, and the remedy to be sought, both from the same source. Dominique Euraea, at Charmes, Nov. 1584, said that it was impossible to restore a sick man to health unless his sickness was transferred in an aggravated form to another, and that such an exchange was always the source of some greater evil. Also that they immediately lost their powers of healing given them by the Demon if any priest or physician had laid his hands on the sick in an attempt to heal him. Alexée Drigie, at Haraucourt, Nov. 1586, said that the cure was never absolutely complete, but that there always remained some trace of the sickness. Catharine Balandre, at Ardumont, Dec. 1584, said that it was in vain to look for any relief or cure of a sickness from a witch once she had been brought to trial for witchcraft; for then she was no longer under the protection of the Demon through whom such cures are made possible. This agrees with the statement of Nicole Morèle, at Serre, Jan. 1587, when, being already a prisoner, he was asked to cure the son of Jean Chemat, whom he admitted that he had afflicted with the sickness from which he was suffering; for he answered that he had lost all such powers when, by the confession of his guilt, he had entirely driven his Demon from him; and in any case the very sanctity of his place of imprisonment would prevent him from using such powers; for it was impossible to cast spells for a cure in the very place of vengeance for the practice of such arts.

This belief must have been in the mind of Damis when he inferred that his master, Apollonius of Tyana, was endowed with divine powers because he broke the fetters from his leg without any difficulty; for he argued that, being under restraint in prison, he could not have done this by any magic or sorcery.

Catharina Gillotia, Huecourt, May 1591, was asked what was the reason that Canassia Godefreda had not recovered from the disease which she



had brought upon her by witchcraft, although she had often given her apples and plums and other things to eat which she had successfully used in curing others; and she answered that it was because Godefreda had not first begged her to heal her. Balia Basolus, of Saint Nicolas des Preys de Verdun, March 1587, and Colette Fischer, of Gerbeville, March 1588, mentioned a new kind of obstacle; saying that if a man afflicted in this way were to make and perform a vow to any of the Saints without having told or consulted with them, this contempt of them prevented them from doing anything further to heal the sickness. But it must be suspected that this obstacle is a fiction engendered by their desire for gain or thanks, for which they are above all things eager. For witches make it their chief business to be asked to perform cures so that they may reap some profit, or at least gratitude; since they are for the most part beggars, who support life on the alms they receive.

Now the obstacles which are thus said to prevent a witch from curing the sickness which she has caused are not altogether illogical or unreasonable. For in the first place it is not without design that the Demon pretends that, in effecting a cure, he must have the help of her through whose agency he has previously caused the disease. No one doubts that he could do this alone and single-handed; but he acts as he does so that his well-doing may be diminished and depreciated by placing the power of performing it at the pleasure of another; and also that he may earn a greater reputation with his disciples for his service to them, when he shows that he will not without consulting them alter anything of which they have been the authors; for it is no small source of gratification to a witch to know that she is accredited with powers of life and death over mankind; and that when she has cast an evil spell upon a man, it will not be removed by any other means than, or

before the time that, she herself shall have determined upon.

Secondly, as to their allegation that they cannot effect a cure except upon an untouched subject who has not already sought physical relief from a physician or spiritual salvation from a priest; here also there is some fraudulent and malicious fiction, since in neither of those cases is the Demon likely to earn any reward for his cure. Therefore this obstacle proceeds rather from the Demon's jealousy and his fear that he would get no credit for a cure which would probably be attributed to another agent who had preceded him. Therefore they take the greatest pains to inculcate in those whom they have bewitched with a sickness the belief that they must shun all remedies, human and divine, if they wish to recover, and that if they even think of having recourse to such remedies they must certainly lose all hope of ever regaining their health. There is always this further motive, that the Demon wishes to avoid indulging the pity of his disciples, if indeed they are ever moved by pity.

And thirdly, as to their being hindered by the fact of their accusation and imprisonment, I would not deny that this is true in the case of those who by confessing their sins and by penitence have driven the Demon from them; for then the pact is broken by the terms of which they had received that supernatural power of healing, and therefore those powers must dwindle and vanish. There can be no more convincing proof of this than the fact that those in that condition have no more power to cast injurious spells, however much they may wish to, not even upon the very torturers who put them to the question. Moreover, it has often been proved that when the Judge, from a wish to put this matter to the test, by a mere nod or a word discharges them, they have at once flown away and, re-entering the Demon's household as it were by right of postliminy, have performed many

stupendous prodigies. But if with contumacious obstinacy they persist in denying their guilt; or if they do not in so many words and after the customary form forswear the society of the Demon and renege his friendship, or rather abjure their fealty to him and shake off his yoke: in that case I should say that their allegation is false, that they are no longer able to do anything under his auspices, particularly if it is a matter of restoring a man to health. For even when they are in chains in their prison cells their Demons often visit them, awake in them a hope of freedom, give them their advice and offer them their services; and are in every respect as favourable, indulgent and helpful to them as they ever were before: so that it is not likely that they would refuse to heal a sickness for them if they asked them, and if it were safe for them to make such a request. Moreover, it is foolish to say that the witch is prevented by his chains, while the Demon, who has no need of the witch's co-operation, is in no way bound or in chains. And there is no Judge who would think of putting any obstacle or hindrance in the way of so salutary a deed, if it lay at all within his discretion.

Nicole Morèle's father, at Serre, Jan. 1587, was charged with witchcraft and was pleading his cause in prison, and something that he said brought his daughter also under suspicion of that crime. Consequently, the Apparitor, who was then present, persuaded the Judge to have her arrested. Her Demon informed Morèle of this while she was still at liberty, and urged her to take some vengeance on the Apparitor for that injury, saying that he would gladly undertake the execution of it if she asked him. She agreed, and he at once flew to the Apparitor's house, where he found his wife sitting by the fire giving her baby the breast, and passing by her he dusted her breasts with so venomous a powder that they were immediately dried up and lost all their milk. The

Apparitor easily suspected the cause of this and went to Morèle, who was now in prison, and giving her a nicely cooked millet cake to appease her, asked her not to refuse him any help that she could give in this matter; for in return he would take care that she lacked for nothing to make her life easy while she was in prison; after which he went out, waiting to see what she would do. The Demon immediately appeared and chid her bitterly for having had converse with the Apparitor; but at last he allowed himself to be persuaded to restore the milk to his wife, even to superfluity if she so desired; and this he soon afterwards did by secretly dusting her with a white powder.

Catharine Ocray at Nancy, 1584, had been released on her own bail, but was again thrown into prison both on account of fresh suspicions against her, and by the strictest command of our Most Serene Prince, in an audience with whom I had unreservedly laid bare the whole facts of this case. When one of the witnesses against her deposed that, before she had been brought back to prison, she had cast a spell upon his arm and withered it, she seized his arm violently as if in anger and, to the great astonishment of all who were present, it was immediately made sound again; and after having been for many months powerless and useless, it became in a moment vigorous and capable of performing all its usual functions as before. This led to a strong suspicion that she maintained her association with her Little Master to the very last; for though she had often been urged to abjure him she had refused to do so, saying that it was impossible to reject one whom you had never admitted. There have been other witches who, though in prison, have prescribed the use of herbs and lotions and unguents and other such remedies, saying that their application to the sick would not be without result.

Lastly, the benefit of such cures is

qualified either by some lasting trace of the sickness, or often by its transference with even greater pain and torment to another. This is but another illustration of the fact which we have already so often pointed out, that the Demon never allows his prey to be snatched wholly from his hands, but that there must always be something as the price and reward of his work. Thus when he enters into a pact to serve and work for a man (on which account he is commonly called the man's familiar spirit), he takes care that the chief condition of the pact shall be that within a stated time he shall be free to find a new master, or else to do what he will with his present master. It was by this condition that he had bound the father of that German whom I mentioned in the story of Maillot. And when the day for its fulfilment was imminent, and he could find no one who would rid him of so amiable a servant, he was finally compelled to transfer that pernicious pest to his only son. The son had to renew the unholy compact of alliance; but he was granted a shorter period of time before the lapse of which he must find another to take his place in the coils of that pact, or himself perish and fall a prey to the hunter. And so it happened to that German. For when the wretched man could find no one to relieve him, as it were, at his post of watch, not even Maillot, who had given him some hope, in the end as he was journeying through Italy with his master, although he was on the alert and his horse did not even stumble, he was thrown and instantly killed.

☆

## CHAPTER VI

*That as an End to a Life of every Crime and Impiety, the Demon insistently urges and impels his Subjects to kill themselves with their own Hand, especially when he sees that there is imminent Danger of their being Suspected. But God in His Goodness and Mercy often thwarts this cruel Scheme, and rather leads them to find Safety in Penitence.*

ALL who have surrendered themselves to the power of the Demon confess that he is so harsh and unjust a taskmaster to them that they often wish to throw off his yoke and return to their former freedom; but that he unremittingly prevents them from doing so except by the one means of taking their own lives.\* Therefore when through weariness of his tyranny, or because of their conscience of guilt, and often through fear of the heavier punishment which surely awaits those who are convicted of that crime, they decide to make an end of themselves, some hang themselves, others stab themselves, others throw themselves into a river or well, and others find some other way; and they never find any difficulty whenever they have made up their minds to this course. For their attempts upon themselves are followed by such sudden and instant death that no one can run to them quickly enough to prevent it: so urgently does the Demon, who certainly has a hand in it, hasten the business.

All doubt as to this is removed by the scarcely credible means by which such suicides are committed. I remember seeing the corpse of one criminal, Sedenarius by name, who had hanged himself from a bone insecurely fixed in the wall with a rotten strip of cloth torn from his clothing, and with his

\* "Taking their own lives." See Guazzo, "Compendium Maleficarum," II, xiii: "After the Many Blasphemies Committed by Witches, the Demon at last Tries to Induce them to Kill Themselves with Their Own Hands."



bent knees nearly touching the floor; but by this means he had killed himself just as effectively as if he had been hanged by a strong rope from a beam at the top of the house with a skilled hangman to perform the operation. And nearly all who thus take their lives die with similar speed and facility.

But these poor wretches do not always have to put an end to their lives and a term to their calamities by the way just explained; for the Divine Shepherd in His ineffable goodness and mercy often calls back to the fold the sheep that have been led away by the wolf, and again feeds them on His celestial pastures. So it is that many witches, as soon as they are cast into prison, do not defer the confession of their crimes until it is wrung from them by torture, but of their own accord and with the greatest joy of spirit lay bare their sins; being, as they say, rejoiced to have the opportunity offered them by which, at the slight cost of their miserable lives, they can preserve themselves from eternal unhappiness.

Joanneta Gallaea, at St. Dominique Nov. 1586, provided ample proof to this effect, when she begged and implored the Judge not to postpone any longer her well-merited punishment; for she was prepared to suffer it with an even mind that she might as quickly as possible expiate the gross impiety towards God of which she had been guilty. Nicole Morèle, Serre, Jan. 1587, from the moment when she confessed her crime to the Judge did not cease to proclaim her happiness because she could now once again come near to God, being free from all her fealty to the Demon; and that she had wished to do this for the last three years, but had been unable even to attempt it, so tenacious of his prey is that Arch-schemer. Catharine Latomia of Marche, at Haraucourt, Feb. 1587, did not deny that for her great wickedness she was deserving of the extreme penalty as well as of the Judge's utmost wrath; but if there yet remained any room for mercy, all she

asked was that her death should no longer be deferred, so that she might as soon as possible stand before the tribunal of that Judge in whom was set all her hope; for her soul was a very heavy burden to her. Idatia of Miremont, at Preney, July 1588, passionately entreated the Judge to deliver her up to death as soon as possible; for even if she broke her chains she would never be free to repent and lead a better life; since she had pledged herself to the Demon, whom, like an importunate creditor, it was impossible to escape paying as long as she remained alive. Apollonia à Freissen (August 1589) said that nothing more welcome could happen to her than death, in which at last she would find an end to her most wicked life; for as long as she lived she would be unable to refrain from black witchcraft, so indefatigable was her Demon in spurring her to such deeds; and that she could not free herself of his tyranny and yoke except by death. Therefore she pleaded that an end might be put to all her misery on the very next day before any of the others, and the way to her Heavenly Father be opened for her. Antonia Marchant, at Insming, May 1591, said that she desired nothing so much as to be put alive on the fire as soon as possible, for even in her own judgement she had long since merited it.

There are even some who ask to be purged by a second baptism,\* thinking that by such means they can again be accepted into the family of Christ. I remember reading in the records of the trial of Joanna Gransaint, at Condé, July 1582, that she repeatedly made

\* "A second baptism." Baptism impresses an ineffaceable character on the soul, which the Council of Trent calls a spiritual and indelible mark (Session VII, can. ix). S. Cyril ("Praep. in Cat.") calls a baptism a "holy and indelible seal," and Clement of Alexandria ("De Diu. Seru.," XLII), "the seal of the Lord." S. Thomas expounds the nature of this indelible seal in the "Summa," III, Q. lxxiii, a. 2.

such a request, but that the devout Judge rightly exposed the folly of and rejected her plea. For, alas! what madness it is to ask for such a repetition, when everybody knows that it has always been condemned and forbidden by the Church! Yet in our time this error has found its advocates; but so far as I know, and deservedly, no one has hitherto thought it worth while to refute them.



### CHAPTER VII

*Some further Examples in Illustration of the above Argument.*

AS we have said in the last chapter, the culmination of this abominable crime is that, after nearly a whole lifetime of sacrilege and wickedness, witches cut off the little that remains to them by laying violent hands upon themselves, and at last put an everlasting end to an execrable life; and so those whom he has in their lives steeped in crime, the Demon brings to eternal punishment in their deaths. This is clearly illustrated by the case of Didier Finance, St.-Dié, July 1581, upon whom, because his sorceries were aggravated by parricide, the College of the Duumvirs of Nancy pronounced the exceptionally severe sentence that he should be burned with red-hot tongs and then be placed alive on the fire. Whether he was informed of this by his Demon, as we shall later show to have happened to certain others, or whether it was foreseen by his own conscience of so terrible a crime, he determined to escape this sentence by seeking his own death. Therefore he took a knife which had carelessly been left in the bread chest by one of the gaolers, thrust it down his throat as far as he could, and so died. In the last two years I remember fifteen, more or less, in Lorraine who have thus violently killed themselves to save themselves from public infamy; but I have thought it better to blot out their

names rather than to renew their memory, lest the reader's mind be filled with horror if I fill my stage with so many unspeakable and frightful spectacles. I shall therefore turn to the consideration of matters which have had a happier outcome.

For (as someone has said) the arrow does not always strike everything at which it is aimed; nor is it always in Satan's power to do as he wills with men by his violence. He is permitted to tempt men, but not to drive them. Therefore it is that he does not himself thrust desperate men into the river against their will, nor hang them with a rope from a beam, nor stab them with a knife; but only urges them to take these courses in their madness. But often all these acts of desperation are prevented by God in His pity for the weakness of man, who in His wisdom protects them now in one way and now in another; as will more clearly be seen from the following examples.

Jeanne le Ban in open confession bore witness that her Demon was in nothing so importunate as in his efforts to persuade her to throw herself into a well, or drown herself in a river, or hang herself with a rope, or destroy herself by some means or other. And it was impossible to say how often she had started to do so, when she had felt herself forcibly prevented in the very act, like one who sees a morsel of food snatched from his lips. But even after that she had not ceased from her attempts, and after her imprisonment she had burned with a desire to kill herself and had redoubled her efforts to do so. And that she might not have the excuse of the impracticability of the deed, the Demon had shown her a forgotten piece of chain lying in a dark corner of her prison, which she could, if she would, put round her neck and so hang herself. This plan pleased her, and she would have carried it out; but she was prevented from completing her purpose by the fact that she could find nothing from which to hang the chain.

The Demon tried to persuade Anne

Drigie, Haraucourt, Nov. 1585, in the same way. For he set before her eyes a picture of the horror and torments of the flames in which she was to be burned, and of the shame and infamy of the public example which was to be made of her, and so easily persuaded her to escape all this by seeking her own death. But she was led to change her decision by that dread and horror of an immediate evil which is natural to all men, as well perhaps as by the thought of certain damnation for her soul, which is feared by even the most abandoned. Therefore she firmly rejected the Demon's advice, which was that she should throw herself out of the upper window of her prison, from which there was a deep fall.

When he could by no other means persuade Didier Gérard of Vennezey to commit this deed, he added as a final inducement that, if he killed himself, he would become a Demon like himself, able to do whatever he wished; but not even this could shake or move his determination. For having been so often before deceived by the Demon, he suspected all his advice, and would certainly not be ruled by him any more. Further, he had no wish for an apotheosis so different from that of the Saints as it had been taught him.



### CHAPTER VIII

*That the Demon's Grip is very Tenacious and cannot easily be loosed once it has taken a Hold; and therefore they use every Effort to prevent their Subjects in Prison, even when they are being tortured, from confessing themselves Guilty of the Witchcraft with which they are Charged, and so from returning to a State of Grace by their Penitence. But that often, when God so wills, these Schemes and Stumbling-blocks of theirs come to Nothing.*

ONCE he has gained power over a man the Demon so obstinately retains his hold that he will not release

his grip or withdraw his help from him even when he is in prison and under the protection, as it were, of the Judge. And although this had been made so clear by all who have treated on this subject that it may seem superfluous to embark upon any discussion of it, yet I have no qualms about adding a few words in order to unmask more completely the cunning plots of that Schemer.

No sooner had Quirina Xallaea, Blainville, Feb. 1587, been put in prison than her Demon visited her and warned her that she would not escape from that place before she had been terribly racked and searched with the torture; but that if only she would bear in silence a brief period of pain she would certainly gain her liberty afterwards, and that he would not fail her at her need in the meantime. And not long afterwards it happened with her as he had foretold; for while she was under torture and was being most severely racked, the Demon was all the time lurking in her hair net encouraging her and promising her that the torture would soon be over. And if by chance the Judge signed to the torturer to relax the pressure for a little, the Demon anticipated this and foretold it to the miserable woman as if it were his own doing. But when there was no remittance of her pain and it could no longer be endured by even the most obstinate, she broke out as follows: "Take me away! I have listened long enough to this traitor. See, I am ready to confess the truth." And so, after being bidden to abjure him in solemn terms, she was freed from the Demon's yoke and gave a full account of all her crimes from the day when she had first bound herself to him.

Anna Xallaea, Blainville, Feb. 1587, told a similar story in almost the same words, except that the Demon had not hidden in her hair, but deep down in her throat while she was being tortured, doubtless so that he could more easily prevent her from speaking if the intolerable pain inclined her to con-



fess her guilt. And this fact did not escape the notice of those who were present; for they saw her throat swell up until it stood out on a level with her chin, and it became so livid and discoloured that it might easily be thought that she was suffering from an acute quinsy.

Françoise Fellet, Pangy-sur-Moselle, Nov. 1584, said that the same necessity for silence was imposed upon her by the Demon; and, moreover, that her ears were so closed to the voice of the Judge when he first examined her that she heard no more than if he had not been speaking at all; but when this charm was broken and the truth had been wrung from her by torture, the Demon did not cease from that time to threaten her with death; and therefore she begged that they would never leave her alone, especially at night, the solitude of which was particularly favourable to his attempts.

Anne Morèle at Hadonville, Nov. 1581, and some others said that while they were being tortured the Demon had supported them from no nearer than the end of the rack, from which place he prevented them from speaking just as effectively as if he had entirely hidden himself in their ears.

It is, indeed, impossible to say how fast the Demon holds to the prey he has once seized, in spite of the Judge's most carefully considered efforts, which he so often baffles that, thanks to him, not a few witches have escaped the due reward of their crimes. For many, says Iamblichus, have been put upon the fire and have not been burned, for the Demon within them has blown back the fire; or if they have been burned they have not felt it, neither do they feel any prickings or scratches or any tortures. I remember those who have been once and even twice discharged as innocent, but on being taken up for the third time they have at last confessed the crimes of which they had been guilty from the beginning.

Of these the case of François Fellet, at Pangy-sur-Moselle, Dec. 1587,

comes to my mind. This man, by concealing the truth and enduring the torture, twice escaped the sentence of death; but when for the third time he was taken red-handed, he confessed and paid a tardy but heavy penalty for his crimes.

There have also been those who have endured the agony of torture without confessing, but when they were on the point of being discharged from prison have acknowledged the crime which they have up to that point concealed. This was lately instanced by Margareta Valtrina, who for a whole hour endured the most vehement torture without admitting any guilt; but at last when she was about to be set at liberty she asked to see the Judge and, after begging his forgiveness for her obstinacy, disclosed everything from the time when the Demon had first ensnared her right through the whole story of all her crimes.

It is worth while to record what happened to Alexée Belheure, Blainville, Jan. 1587, to the amazement and astonishment of all who were present, when she wished to do the same thing. For as she was preparing herself to make free confession in this way and had, as is the Christian custom, blessed herself with the Lord's Prayer, she was hurled against the wall behind her with such force that many would have carried her out as a dead woman. But as she gradually came to herself, and was asked what had caused her to fall in that manner, she said: "Can you not see him lying under the couch, that murderer who took me by the throat and nearly throttled me? See how he is threatening me with his looks and trying all he can to frighten me from saying a word! This is not the first time he has tried to keep me from telling the truth; for while I was being tortured he was in my left ear like a flea, busily warning me to hold my tongue and not let myself be defeated by a short time of not so very acute pain."

Thus like a strenuous pugilist he does

not rest or tire as long as there remains any chance of continuing the fight; nor will he leave his hold on those who have once entered his service until they are snatched from him like a sheep from a wolf. And when he foresees that this is going to happen, he often prevents it either by basely persuading his disciples to hang themselves, or else himself actually twists their necks or beats them to death, or kills them in some other way, unless God restrains him. All this has been amply shown by pertinent examples. And if he may not achieve such a result, yet he tries to work some sort of mischief or harm so that he shall not leave them without hurting them in some way.

Thus, although Catharina Latomia of Marche, at Haraucourt, Feb. 1587, was not yet of an age to suffer a man, he twice raped her in prison, being moved with hatred for her because he saw that she intended to confess her crime; and she very nearly died from the injuries she received by that coition.

Here the question arises whether it is possible for a witch, against the will of the Demon, to break her compact with him, or whether she is not rather compelled to keep it for as long as she lives. If a lawyer were asked his opinion, no doubt he would say that a contract which contains a dishonourable clause is not binding. But here there is no question of legality: the point is whether, just as a military deserter is denied the right of postliminy (*L. Item ci. Ex. quibus caus. maior.*), in the same way those who have once deserted from God to the enemy of the human race are cut off from every approach to God's mercy, so that they may never return from the side to which they have fled. They who maintain that this is the case base their opinion on the fact that witches are never moved to that repentance which must precede the remission of sins (*S. Matthew iii. 2*), since they are hindered by the Demon who is the vigilant di-

rector of all their actions; or if they are at all so moved, their case is like that of the traitor Judas who felt remorse, indeed, for his crime, but none the less did not repent and turn again to God, but rather in the last despair brought upon himself the most damnable death. And this, as we have already shown, is often done by witches.

But I shall not base my discussion of this question on the arguments of the Theologians, but shall only put before the reader what I have learned, from my experience in examining not a few of them, of the stubbornness and obstinacy of witches. I have heard many of them say that they have often formed a wish to rid themselves of their Little Masters, both because they saw that they were cheated by them, and chiefly because of their intolerable and savage cruelty; but that they were unable to free themselves, for as soon as such a thought entered their minds the Demon came and punished it with a beating, or, failing that, all their efforts to emancipate themselves had come to nothing.

When Agathe, the wife of François Tailleur, at Pittelange, September, 1590, grew weary of her harsh servitude, she at last decided to have recourse to a remedy which many have impiously thought to be most efficacious. Therefore she went to the neighbouring town of Sarveden accompanied by Eva, the daughter of Albert von Kirchel, and caused the priest to re-baptize her, Eva standing as her godmother. None the more for that did the wicked spirit cease from beating and kicking her, or from bespattering her face with all sorts of filth and humiliating her in every possible way.

I shall not dwell upon what I have already recorded to have happened to a girl at Joinville, who was initiated into the magic arts by her witch mother, and could not be so completely reformed by devout teaching and training but that the Demon kept some hold over her by which he was able to be avenged upon her. For this

has long been their complaint, that the mortar can never be so thoroughly cleaned but that it retains some scent of the herbs which have been bruised in it. But I would not understand this to mean that the wound is, as they say, *Chironian*\* or irremediable. For is it not written: "Shall they fall, and not arise? Shall he turn away, and not return?" (*Jeremiah*, viii. 4). Or who shall hinder the Lord from releasing the bound, giving sight to the blind, or breaking their chains? This I will say: that as long as witches are under his control, that is, as long as they are not influenced by any examination, imprisonment or torture, they always preserve as complete a silence as they can with regard to their crimes. Therefore I believe that the supposed wretchedness of imprisonment (although, as I have said, this does not always necessarily follow) is, at the will of God and when He expiates their sins, the beginning of salvation for witches. An analogy might be drawn from the boil of Jason,† Tyrant of Phærae, which the physicians could not heal; but his bitterest enemy opened it and saved him from certain and instant death. And the men of our country have a proverb (if we may find any truth in such sayings) that the surest road to happiness lies through misfortune.

This view is abundantly substantiated by the unanimous assertion of witches, that the first light of liberty

\* "*Chironian*." The phrase is from Celsus, V, xxviii, 5, "*Chironium vulnus*." It also occurs in the "*Herbarium*," a work of the fourth century long falsely ascribed to Apuleius. The centaur Chiron being wounded by one of the poisoned arrows of Hercules, bestowed upon Prometheus his immortality, but Jupiter set him among the stars.

† "*Jason*." Tyrant of Phærae and generalissimo of Thessaly, probably the son of Lycophron, who established a tyranny on the ruins of the aristocracy of Phærae. Jason succeeded his father soon after 395 B.C., and proved a great warrior and diplomat. At the height of his power he was assassinated, 370.

dawns on their misery on that day when the Judge uses violence, terrorism and torture against them; and they earnestly beg not to be discharged from prison and again be delivered into the bondage of that Tyrant; for their only hope of salvation was to be taken as quickly as possible to their death while they were penitent and sorry for their sins. And they entreat the Judge to punish in the same way all others who come up for trial and confess their crime; for by no other means can they put an end to their evil-doing and witchcraft, however much they may wish to; so unremittingly does the Demon stand over them and threaten them as long as they are free from custody and have not yet been admitted to the asylum, as it were, and shelter of the law. But these are matters which we may rather leave to the judgement of the Theologians, as I have already said. I have fulfilled my purpose by recording that which I have observed.



## CHAPTER IX

*That there are many Methods used by the Judges of our Day before they bring a Witch to the Torture to counteract the Charms by which they are said to nullify the Efficacy of the Torture; but that such Methods are not to be commended, since, as the Proverb says, they do but drive out one Nail with Another, and overcome one Evil with Another.*

THERE are many, according to Ulpian and Fabius, who so despise torture that their tolerance of it can easily create a false impression.‡ That it was so in the case of the harlot Leaena, of Anaxarchus, of Antiphila of Cyrene, and many others we learn

‡ "*False impression*." Upon this matter one may profitably consult Guazzo, "*Compendium Maleficarum*," Book I, xv.



from the writings of Pliny\* (*Nat. Hist.* VII, 23) and Valerius (*Lib. VIII*, cap. 4); and the fact is a matter of common knowledge from every-day experience. But it is agreed that this often proceeds either from physical hardness or mental determination; and this ought not to seem at all wonderful or strange, for it is possible for human endurance to reach such a pitch. This is more than sufficiently clear from the stories as related by Plutarch of Marius, who bore in silence the long and terrible pain of his leg being cut off; and of the Spartan boy who hid a fox under his garment but would not utter the least cry of pain when it rent and tore out his entrails (Plutarch, in *Laconicis apophthegm.*). But that, without feeling any pain, they can bear to have their arms twisted and forcibly stretched and pulled out, or (as S. Gregory of Tours tells, *Hist. Franc.* VI, 35, was done in the case of Mummol,† the Prefect under King Chilperic) stretched from a beam‡ behind their back, or dragged out by pulleys; or to be fastened by the finger-nails to a stake; or that they can during their

torture go to sleep, which is impossible except when a man is at ease; this far surpasses the belief of all men. Yet this is so well known to be the case, by those who have subjected criminals, especially witches, to the torture, that it has become their chief care to know how they can oppose cunning to cunning, and drive one nail out with another.

Therefore some take the precaution of ordering their officers to lift a witch up and so carry her without her touching the ground, like another Antaeus, from her house to the prison. This is especially the custom of the Germans who live in the further provinces of Lorraine, and I think that it is for a similar reason that our people of the Vosges, especially the peasants, have the following custom: when a virgin is to be married and is about to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony, two of the strongest men make a chair of their folded arms and so carry her from her house to the church, believing that by this they effectively guard against the spells and enchantments which may be woven to hinder the marriage.

Others cause the witch to take off all her clothes and put on an under-garment which has been spun, woven and stitched all in one day; for it needs something involving labour and difficulty to combat and overcome so great a difficulty.

Others have the witch completely shaved§ from the soles of her feet to the crown of her head before they bring her to the torture, because they believe that she may have a Demon hidden in the hair of her head or of some other part of her body. Philostratus testifies that this was done by the order of the Emperor Domitian in the case of Apollonius of Tyana (*In Apollonii uita*, VII, 34, and VIII, 7); because he had more than once said that he derived his visionary powers from his hair, and

\* "Pliny." "Patientia corporis, ut est crebra sors calamitatum, innumera documenta peperit. Clarissimum in feminis, Leaenae meretricis, quae torta non indicavit Harmodium et Aristogitonem tyrannicidas: in uiris, Anaxarchi, qui simili de causa cum torqueretur, praerosam dentibus linguam, unamque spem indicii, in tyranni os exspuit." The Athenians honoured the memory of Leaena by a bronze statue of a lioness (λέαινα) without a tongue, on the Acropolis between the Propylea and the temenos of Artemis Brauronia. See Pausanias, i, 23, 2; Plutarch, "De Garrulitate," viii; and Poly-aenus, viii, 45.

† "Mummol." See "The Geography of Witchcraft," by Montague Summers, Chapter V, pp. 354-55.

‡ "Beam." The strappado. Coryat, who saw this punishment inflicted at Venice, calls it "a very tragicall and dolefull spectacle" ("Cru-dities," I, 392). In Alfred Ceresole's "Lé-gendes des Alpes Vaudoises" (p. 131) is an illustration of a sorcerer submitted to this torture.

§ "Shaved." For an authoritative account of this procedure see the "Malleus Maleficarum," Part III, Question 15.

therefore would by no means allow it to be cut. And not long ago, at Mirecourt, Dec. 1583, when Alexia Gallaea of Beroncourt was eager to disclose her crimes to the Judge but could not because (so she said) of the presence of her Demon, she asked that her hair might be cut off and thrown on to the fire; and when this was done she at once began to enumerate all the crimes she had committed under the Demon's auspices and leadership. It may be that the Demon, who is always a base imitator of God's works, in this also tries to copy that which we read of Samson in the Bible; how he had been forbidden from Heaven to cut off his hair if he wished to keep intact the strength which God had given him, for the seat of this was in his hair.

Others again think that by throwing cold water in the witch's face they can drive away the Demon. Rosa Gerardine, at Essay, Nov. 1586, confessed that by this alone was she brought to confess, and that all other methods of coercing her meant nothing to her.

The following method has won the approval of many who have used it, and was witnessed this very year by a Prince of great renown at Serre, a village in the district of St. Jean de Lenoncourt. The witch is bound hand and foot and thrown into a pool\* of cold water: if she swims out unharmed, her guilt is said to be proved; but if she

sinks she is held to be innocent. Desiderius de Gandino† (*Lex prima constitut. Neapol.*), among other matters relative to witchcraft, affirmed this to be a fact beyond question. The custom is believed to have reached us first from Western Saxony, and especially from Westphalia; and it had previously reached those districts from the Illyrians and Triballi; for among them also there were sorceresses who, according to Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* VII, 2), could not be submerged even when weighed down by their garments.

Sprenger and Krämer (*Mall. Malef.* Pt. III, Quest. 15) mention another method which they had observed; namely, that the witch must be brought into the presence of her Judge with her face averted from him. For it is argued that if the witch can get but the merest glance at him at the first, she can fill his mind with pity for her, or rather can bewitch him, just as the basilisk or even the wolf tries to get the first glance at a man:

"The wolves saw Moeris first."‡

Now if the cause of all these things be carefully considered, none more probable, I think, will be found than that the Demon purposely offers the occasion for such experiments, and so provides the material, as it were, by which men are the more easily led to tempt God; for so they do when they pass over and neglect the remedies which lie to their hands, and turn to strange and unwonted remedies which have the Demon as their author and suggestor. For this is the grossest impiety, and it was for this that God formerly punished the Israelites with fiery serpents; and unless we keep ourselves free from this sin He will deliver

\* "A pool." The practice of swimming was particularly favoured in England. It is mentioned in his "Daemonologia" by King James I, who regarded "their fleeting on the water" as a good help to be used in the trial of witches, since "it appears that God hath appointed (for a supernaturall signe of the monstrous impietie of the Witches) that the water shal refuse to receiue them in her bosom, that haue shaken off them the sacred Water of Baptisme, and wilfullie refused the benefite thereof." The experiment was continually being tried up and down the country even during the nineteenth century. For an account of a trial resulting from this as late as September 1865 see the "Geography of Witchcraft," Chapter II, pp. 178-79.

† "Gandino." Desiderius Albertus de Gandino, a Neapolitan jurist, the author of a "Tractatus super maleficiis," of which there are editions, Rome, 1521; Lyons, 1555; Rome, 1575.

‡ "First." Vergil, *Eclogue*, IX, 54: "lupi Moerim uidere priores."

us up for an example to that old serpent the Devil, who is always ready to use his poison against us when we permit it, and even condone it.

But someone will say, the ordeal by water,\* and even by red-hot iron or burning coals, which is far more severe, was formerly practised by Christians, as the Sacred Canons testify; and before that Moses ordered that a bitter drink, accompanied with a curse and execration, should be given to those women who were suspected of adultery, so that the truth, which otherwise would remain in darkness, might be brought to light. For no one has said that by this sacrifice of jealousy (for so it is commonly called) God was tempted; since it was done by His command, as is seen in the Book of Numbers (chap. v).

To this I answer that that was an example fit for that age and for a stiff-necked people who were so much addicted to the sin of adultery, and that it was permitted for that time by God, who, as S. Augustine says, knows just how much each man ought to suffer and endure. But it cannot rightly now be adduced in argument, since all such outlandish trials are prohibited and forbidden to Christians. And we are clearly taught in the Gospel to leave these secret and hidden things to Him who alone knows the hearts of the sons of men, and not to delve or pry into them further than is demanded by the due execution of justice; that is, the voluntary or extorted confession of prisoners justly convicted by the clear testimony of credible witnesses. For no man, says S. Augustine, who has rational methods at his command ought to tempt his God.

Let us rid ourselves, then, of these unlawful, forbidden and damnable inquisitions, lest it be deservedly said of us, as it was once with the greatest in-

justice said by the Pharisees of Christ, that we do not cast out devils save by Beelzebub the chief of the devils (S. Matthew xii. 24); or as Eusebius said of someone, writing to Hierocles, "He is a demon, who drives out one demon by another." Let us not ourselves dabble in those arts which we condemn and reprehend when they are used by witches, and so hurl ourselves to the penalties of sin. Above all let us not aggravate the offence by committing it under the cloak of law and justice, defending it by authority, and so handing it down to posterity as an example and a precedent. For it is human nature that once an error has gained public credence, posterity clings tenaciously to it and, as the Doctors of Law say, hold it for the truth. We give wrong the place of right, says Seneca (*Epist. XXII*, 124), as soon as it has received the sanction of the public.



## CHAPTER X

*That Knowledge of the Future belongs to God; and if the Demons appear to be endowed with such Knowledge, it is nothing but a Presentiment and Conjecture drawn by shrewd Induction from the Past; or a simulated Prediction of Events which they have themselves already determined upon; or, finally, a very early Announcement, made possible by their marvellous Speed, of Events which have taken place in various distant Regions.*

ALL who have embraced and retained any true religion agree that knowledge and prescience of future events belongs to God alone (S. John Chrysostom, *Homel.* 18; *Isaiah* xli; *Daniel* ii). And when His disciples presumptuously pressed Christ to restore again the kingdom to Israel, He rebuked them saying: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (*Acts* i). And Socrates

\* "Ordeal by water." Upon the various Ordeals and Appeals see Guazzo, "Compendium Maleficarum," Book II, Chapters xviii-xix.



said, Xenophon, Lib. 4, *de dict. et fact. Socratis*, that the Gods were not pleased with the man who sought to know that which they did not wish him to know. Pindar also, although he lived in an age when men's minds were still bound by the base errors of Demons, said that knowledge of the future was hidden from men, and that only the perspicacity and keenness of the divine light could penetrate it. So also, Aulus Gellius tells us, XIV, 1, thought Pacuvius, when he said: "They who would foresee the future make themselves equal with Jove." Apollonius of Tyana, who professed that he was ignorant of nothing which men can know, nevertheless said that the art of divination surpassed all the bounds of human nature, and that he did not know whether any man had any skill in it. Further, he said, in his speech before Domitian, that he was horrified by those who, ignorant of the nature of the Gods, dared to assert that they foreknew what was in the minds of the Gods (*Philostratus*, III, 13). Ammianus Marcellinus (*Rerum gest.* XXV) says that, although Julian, surnamed the Apostate, was a most abandoned and inveterate seeker of presages, this Emperor acknowledged that only the Powers above could foretell the outcome of future events.

Nevertheless, there is a strong belief not only among the heathen whose Gods are Demons, but among Christians who acknowledge the prescience and foreknowledge of the true God, that the future can be foreseen by vaticinations, portents, oracles, dreams and divinations; and that there is in the Demons, who are popularly thought to have control over such matters, a power of prediction which is rarely deceived. The supporters of this belief claim for it the unmistakable authority of S. Basil, where, glossing upon *Isaiah* viii, he says that the Demons very often foretell the future; and of S. Augustine where he says that they know and announce events long before they have happened. Serapis did this

when he predicted that within a certain time his image would be destroyed and that his whole cult and worship would be abolished with contempt. And the witch's Demon\* in the appearance of Samuel told Saul that on the next day he would lose his kingdom and his sons and his life (*I. Sam.* xxviii). Cimon's dog (says Plutarch), that is the Demon appearing in the form and likeness of a dog, spoke to him in the midst of its barking in human tongue and foretold his certain death. Another Demon, in the shape of a yellow-haired boy, appeared to that Julian (the Apostate) whom we have just mentioned, and predicted that he would die in Phrygia; and so it happened not long afterwards (*Zonaras, Annal. tomo. III*). And, to come to more recent times, another Demon foretold to Guntram,† King of Orleans and Burgundy, not only the year and the day, but even the very hour at which Charibert would die. And but a short while ago, at Essay, June 1590, four days before she was imprisoned to answer a charge of witchcraft, her Little Master told Jana, the wife of Nicolas Michel, that this would certainly happen to her. Ancient and recent history abounds in such examples of Demons' predictions being proved true by the event.

What then? Shall we so allow ourselves to be driven into a corner by these arguments that we must admit that God communicates to the most wicked of all His creatures His plans and dispensations formed with especial regard to the affairs of mankind? Certainly not! But just as the Devil always apes and imitates all the other

\* "Witch's Demon." It must be remembered that Remy assumes the unusual and indeed inadmissible explanation that the spectre was the Demon appearing as Samuel.

† "Guntram." At the death of Clotaire in 561 the monarchy was divided between his four sons: Guntram reigned at Orleans, Charibert at Paris, Sigebert at Reims, and Chilperic at Soissons. Charibert died in 567.

glorious powers of God, so more than ever in this respect does he exert every effort whereof he is capable; for there is nothing by which men can more easily be caught and choused than by a seeming foreknowledge of their future fate, whether it be good or bad. Then, too, his natural properties are such as to make the practice of this deception very easy for him. In the first place, he has the memory of all that has happened from the remotest antiquity and from the very beginning of all things; and, as S. Basil says, even we, by comparison and induction from things past, can often conjecture what is to come. In addition to this he is endowed with great keenness and subtlety of perception; amazing agility and speed of motion; and a ready facility for working swift glamorous changes and variations in objects. We have the authority of S. Augustine to the effect that the Demon can send diseases, can vitiate and corrupt the very air, can seduce men to his own way of thinking, can transform the appearance of things, and perform many other prodigies; and all these faculties open up for him a ready and easy road to the early announcement of that which has already occurred or the anticipatory prediction of what is to come. The longevity of the first men is said to have given them much leisure for observation; and out of this arose the science of astrology, by which it is thought to be possible to have precognition of the overthrow of kingdoms, of wars, the yield of the crops, pestilences, and such matters. What wonder then if, having lived continuously without even sleeping since the beginning of the world, the Demons with their vigorous memory and unfettered powers of reasoning have acquired some faculty for conjecturing the future? Physicians can form a prognosis of impending diseases from the patient's aversion from or fastidiousness in regard to food, his physical lassitude, sleeplessness and other symptoms; and when the sickness has taken

hold they can conjecture its probable severity or cure from the patient's sweating, excreta and many other such critical indications. Will not a far more certain and unerring judgement of such things be formed by the Demons, to whom all the inner and hidden secrets of nature are clearer than is the noontide light to mortal men? By relays of horses and by other means of shortening the journey the report of events in outlying countries often reaches the ears of Princes with a speed which would seem hardly credible to meaner men if they did not know from experience that it was a fact. Can we then hesitate to admit that the Demons are able to announce almost at the very moment of its occurrence that which has happened in remote and distant regions, so that men in the slowness of their perception marvel at it and regard it in the light of a prognostication?

That the Demons can in the briefest moment of time traverse the greatest distances of space has already been shown by such pertinent examples that there is no need to reopen that question. But if anyone needs further proof he ought to be abundantly satisfied by what has been recorded by both Greek and Latin authors. Castor and Pollux brought to Rome the news of the defeat of the Latins at Lake Regillus on the very day on which the battle was fought. The victory of the Locrians over the men of Croton at the Sacred River was announced as soon as it had been won at Sparta, Corinth and Athens simultaneously. When Apollonius was in Egypt, he nevertheless knew how the rising against the Emperor Vitellius was proceeding in Rome; and again, as he was disputing at the hour of noon at Ephesus, and at that very hour Domitian was assassinated in Rome, he told the whole event in every detail as if he were present as a witness. Within the memory of our great-grandfathers, Louis XI of France was informed for a certainty that Charles, Duke of

Burgundy,\* had been defeated and slain with his whole army before this city of Nancy; and although the king was no less than ten days' journey away, it was afterwards found that at that very hour the Burgundians had been routed and exterminated. I need not continue to enumerate the many examples of this sort which the reader will find scattered throughout the histories of past times.

All this premonstration of future events, therefore, is the outcome of conjecture, observation, the anticipation of rumours, rapidity of travelling and other stranger methods. It is not certain, constant, infallible, firm, stable or enduring; for such prescience may only be ascribed to God, with whom all time is the present. But the Demons thus untiringly exercise their powers in this respect in order to inspire their disciples with a wondering belief in their benevolence, or to warn and strengthen them against defection when they are compelled to answer for their crimes in a court of justice. For nearly all witches who have come to that condition have affirmed that it had been foretold to them. The Demon appeared to Jana Gerardine, at Pangy-sur-Moselle, Nov. 1584, as if in a state of indignation that she should be spending her life in prison tearing her hair, and told her that on the next day she would be dragged away to the question of the torture. He made a similar announcement to François Fellet (*ibidem*, Dec. 1584) when he appeared to him in prison in the likeness of a raven. And in the same way to Anna Morèle, at Hadonville, Nov. 1581, whom he also commanded with the direst threats not to betray herself or her associates to the Judge. On the day before she was to be tortured he told Alexia Belheure, Blainville, Dec. 1587, that there had come from the

neighbouring town a torturer who would put her to truly agonizing and exquisite pain; but that she must take care lest, by shirking a short time of torture, she should incur the punishment of most cruel and certain death; and she would not even escape with impunity the consequences of giving rein to her tongue, for he also would heavily avenge it upon her. When the day dawned upon which Jean Rotier, Huecourt, Sept. 1586, was to suffer the extreme penalty he was visited as usual by his gaoler and was asked if he needed anything. "I have enough for now," he answered; "but if you wish to do anything for me, do it at once; for to-day you see me for the last time." And when the gaoler, to relieve him of that fear, said that so far as he knew there was no reason why he should not come off free and unharmed he replied: "Nay, it is no use trying to cheat me; for I have been told all by my Little Master this night." And he recounted all the Judge's deliberations as if he had been a witness of them; and repeated this a few hours later when he stood before his Judges to be sentenced to death, adding that on the preceding night his Little Master had been with him all the time, no bigger than eight fingers in height. Such must have been that Tages,† who was certainly some Demon, of whom Cicero writes that, when the ground was being ploughed in Tuscany and the ploughshare had dug rather deep into the ground, he suddenly sprang from the earth; and yet he was girt with a long sword as if he had been a man of great athletic and physical prowess.

† "Tages." Tages was a supernatural being, who, as Cicero writes, "*De Divinatione*," II, xxiii, 50, once appeared suddenly in a field to a Tuscan ploughman, and taught him and all the people of Etruria the art of the haruspices. See the "*Geography of Witchcraft*," Chapter I, p. 17.

\* "Burgundy." In a battle fought near Nancy, in January 1477, the army of the Duke of Burgundy was totally defeated and he himself lost his life.



## CHAPTER XI

*That it need not seem marvellous to anyone that the Demons remain with their Disciples even during the Sessions of the Court : since they are also found to frequent the interior of Churches and Places hallowed by the Majesty of God's Presence. Incidentally a Memorable Example of this is related : and the Question is disputed whether Demons can render themselves visible to those alone whom they will, although many other Men are present at the Time.*

THERE is no place so sacred and hallowed but that the Demon tries to desecrate it, so boldly and hardily does he break all bounds when he pursues his prey and lays his snares for men. In the holiest sanctuaries of our churches, in the most sacred assemblies, in the remote cells of Anchorites and among those who have forsworn the world, he is a frequent and busy visitor, as is clearly shown by the crimes that have been committed in such hallowed places at his suggestion and under his guidance. He was even bold, as we read in the history of Job, to present himself before the Lord together with the sons of God. Therefore it should not be wondered at, if at the very shrine of the law and while the Judges are actually sitting in judgement he dares to stand by his disciples as a sort of surety for them.

Before I became a Public Officer of Justice I had often heard stories of this impudent behaviour of the Demon; but I took no more notice of them than if they had been tales of hobgoblins and bugaboos told by nurses to frighten naughty children. Now that I have given careful personal attention to the matter and have been convinced by unassailable proofs, I do not hesitate to hand on my knowledge to others, who, however, must not, if they refuse to believe me, deem me any more biassed than I once thought they were who told me these things when I was inexperienced. Therefore of many

examples I shall give you one, reader, as to the truth of which I stake my honour; for I witnessed it with my own eyes in the exercise of my judicial office.

There was a witch, commonly called Lasnier because her husband was a donkey-man, whom I pressed so hard in respect of the evidence given against her that she was left with no loophole for evasion or escape. She had therefore determined to make a clean breast of all her crimes, and was on the point of doing so when her face suddenly changed colour; she fixed her eyes in amazement upon a corner of her cell, and began to lose all power of speech or reason. I asked if she had been suddenly seized with any sickness. She answered that she could see her Little Master at the top of that corner fiercely threatening her with hands forked and clawed like a crab, and that he seemed to be on the point of flying at her. I looked at the place, and she kept pointing at it with outstretched finger; but I saw nothing. However, I told her to be of good courage, and with great confidence and certainty spoke much in contempt and scorn of that Little Master; and so she recovered from her fear and once more began her interrupted confession. But again she saw him monstrously threatening in another corner and, like a play-actor, in another shape; for he had horns growing straight out from his forehead and seemed as if he would gore her with them. But after he had again been ridiculed and utterly reviled he departed and was no more seen by her, as she declared when she was just about to be led to the fire. I had heard that the same thing had happened not many years before at Metz.

Here there arises a question worthy of individual investigation. Can Demons make themselves visible to one man, and at the same time remain invisible to everyone else who is present? For certainly, when Lasnier was so persistently pointing out her Little Master to me as plainly visible, nothing could be discerned by me though I

looked most intently; nor have I yet heard of anyone whose eyes have seen more than mine of such a thing, however keen-sighted they may be. And this proves either that the witches are lying, in the hope of moving their Judges to fear (as they often evilly attempt to do); or that there is in Demons some faculty by which, as we have said, they can appear to those to whom they wish to manifest themselves, while all else who are present see nothing. I cannot believe that the former alternative is true; for I have learned, nay, I have myself seen, that witches are so moved and stricken by this happening that they appear as if verily they would swoon to death, so stupefied becomes their speech, so filled with horror their face and their whole body with trembling. Certainly they could not be such clever actors as to assume all these symptoms without the fraud being easily detected; to say nothing of the persistence with which they maintain their assertions in the midst of the very flames and in the hands of the torturer.

I rather believe that this is a glamour cast by the Demons, by which they delude the sight of those alone whom they will, leaving that of all the others free and unfettered. Opticians tell us that our capacity for seeing anything depends upon the light or dark of the intermediate air, and that this raises our power of vision from potentiality to actuality: now the Demons can at will control both light and darkness. For God gave them power over the air (*Ephesians*, ii, 2), therefore no one ought to doubt that they have the power to make themselves visible or invisible to each man as they wish: for, as Lactantius says (*De origine errorum* II, 15), they accomplish the even more astounding feat of causing that which is not to appear to men as if it were. Therefore it was not unaptly that some have called the Demons optical illusions. And I think that this is the explanation of the stories, so often to be found in even good authors, of

Gyges' Ring,\* the Helmet of Darkness,† and the Divining Rod, as well as of all the methods used by the masters of so-called White Magic with which they claim to be naturally endowed. Of this description also is that which Pliny (XXVIII, 8) quotes from Democritus concerning the left foot of the chameleon, which, if it be baked in an oven together with the carline-thistle and formed into pellets, renders the wearer of them invisible. For when Gellius (X, 12) condemns this story as ridiculous and inept,‡ he can hardly escape laying himself open to ridicule, as not knowing that it has always been the practice of Demons and their disciples in their illusions and spells to make use of some visible external object with which to delude the eyes of men. Moreover a man ought not to be sceptical of anything just because it is strange, but ought to respect the word of a learned author such as Cicero says Democritus to have been in many

\* "Gyges' Ring." Gyges, King of Lydia, was famous for the possession of a magic ring by means of which he could render himself invisible at will. The story is related by Cicero, "*De Officiis*," III, ix.

† "Helmet of Darkness." The helmet of the god Hades, which rendered its wearer invisible, according to late traditions (*Apollodorus*, I, 2, 1) was presented to him by the Cyclopes after their delivery from Tartarus. Both gods and men were occasionally honoured by Hades with the temporary use of the helmet. "*Iliad*," V, 844-5:

τὸν μὲν Ἀρης ἐνάριζε μαιφόνος· αὐτὰρ Ἀθήνη  
δὴν Ἀΐδος κινέην, μή μιν ἴδοι δβριμος Ἀρης.

Aristophanes, "*Acharnians*," 389-90, has:

λαβὲ δ' ἐμοῦ γ' ἔνεκα, παρ' Ἱερωνύμου  
σκοτοδαστυκνότηριχά τω' Ἀΐδος κινῆν.

Hesiod in the "*Scutum*" (222) speaks of the dreadful helmet of Hades, having a fearful gloom of night. One may compare the *Nebel* or *Tarn-kappa* of the "*Niebelungenlied*."

‡ "Vanity." Gellius when he mentions this charm says it is so absurd that he wonders if it be worth record: "*aliud, quod hercle an ponerem dubitavi; ita est deridiculae uanitatis.*"

of his works (*De Nat. Deor.* Lib. I); and I think that in such matters we should give more weight to the opinion of one who had given much thought and study to the subject of these occult arts. For, says Cicero, *De Divinatione*, Lib. II, he used to ascribe such virtue to the inspection of the internal organs that, from their condition and colour, he held it possible to prefigure the plenty or dearth of the earth's harvest, and the salubrity or the reverse of the air which surrounds us; for it must be admitted that he wavered in his judgement of the nature of the Gods, a state of mind which it is the first and chief care of Demons to induce and inculcate into witches. Besides, Pliny in no sense quotes this as being a sure and indubitable fact, but rather as a fable or fiction, since he qualifies it with the words "If we are to believe."

However this may be, our daily experience, confirmed by the ample authority of many writers, leads us to this conclusion; that when the Demons assume some bodily form, they have nevertheless the power to make themselves visible only to those to whom they wish to show themselves, however great a concourse of men may be present at the time. In the case of Katoptromancy and Gastromancy (that is, divinations performed by a boy, trained for the purpose in the precepts of those arts; who inspects some object—either a round-bellied glass filled with water, or a mirror submerged in water), charms which, we are told by Spartianus, Didius Julianus\* some-

times essayed, is it not the fact that the boy alone clearly perceives and announces what he sees, while even his master who orders and controls the whole divination sees nothing at all? Conversely, the jugglers and conjurers of the market-places make many things appear to a whole crowd of men although they themselves can see nothing. Apuleius says that he saw a mounted conjurer swallow a sword with a deadly blade, thrusting it right down his throat to the belief of those even who were watching him most closely; yet he did not himself believe what he thus made others believe, knowing that the blade never left his hands. Many think that this is done by quickness and sleight of hand, by which they can easily deceive the less observant, or those who are standing at some little distance; but we have elsewhere shown that in many cases such feats cannot be performed without the aid of a Demon, especially when they are such as to pass the comprehension of our natural senses. Such was the case which we have already told of the German who was seen to swallow a whole waggon of hay together with its driver and horses; for this could not have been possible without some signal corruption or depravation of the spectators' senses. This is called by Plato *γοητεία*, that is (as Budaeus interprets it in his commentary on the Greek language), to benumb with some spell so as to deceive the person so bewitched; and in our own language "*engigner*," signifying an ingenious and skilful imposture. For even as the light of a lantern is dimmed either by the stronger and more splendid light of the sun, or by the interposition of some

\* "*Julianus.*" *M. Didius Salvius Julianus*, who bought the Roman Empire after the death of the *Peritax*, A.D. 193, only reigned two months, from the 28th of March to the 1st of June, being assassinated by the soldiers. "*Julianus* was also given to a particular kind of madness—the consultation of magicians before he undertook any business and the conduct of affairs under their direction, since hereby he imagined that he could either assuage the dislike the people bore him or else curb the violence of the soldiery. For his satellites were wont to offer in sacrifice victims clean contrary to any

Roman custom, they also made trial of foreign spells and incantations, and dabbled in that kind of sorcery called *Katoptromancy*, which is to say that boys, when they have been blindfold for a while and certain runes recited over them, see the future in a mirror; thus a boy is said to have seen the murder of *Julianus* and the accession of *Severus*."



dense and opaque body; so the transparency of the air can be so obscured by the Demon's art, which can easily shadow the appearance of anything, that the power of vision is entirely taken from even the most keen-sighted. Darkness, says Plutarch, binds and constricts the sight, and so enfeebles and deadens it; whereas too much light dissipates and disintegrates it; but when the air is such as to provide the proper medium for sight, that is, when it is temperate and moderate, then the eyes can freely and without hindrance exercise their function.

Therefore since, as we have just said, darkness and light are to a great extent in the control of the Demons, it ought not to seem wonderful that they can cause themselves to appear or to vanish as if this were an actual result which they can achieve at their discretion; and that they can cause this sort of blindness in those alone to whom it appears to be the truth, very much in the same manner as men can deflect the rays of the sun with a mirror and direct them upon whom they will, and so dazzle them that they can see no more than the blind.

But when all this is said, there remains one difficulty. When these phenomena occur there is no sign of any effulgence or obfuscation, but the air is everywhere perfectly clear and unobscured; so that the above arguments seem hardly pertinent to our present inquiry. But it is certain that the Demons have other means of affecting us, and can control other forces than such as are derived from purely natural sources. Proclus\* says that to each one of our faculties belongs its own proper condition by which it can be influenced and affected by the Demons; that is, as I interpret it, not by the same means and methods as are normally followed by nature. And

Psellus† says that by putting on the Helmet of Pluto, Demons disturb men's minds by some magic art, and by some false deception implant shapes or colours or what they will in their imaginations, and cause them to fancy that they see visions. Therefore it is useless to attempt to reconcile this question with a regular order of natural causes; and it must be confessed that when Demons, as Porphyrius says, perform their prodigies, they work in a manner quite foreign to nature; and this, I think, is why Iamblichus called them the lackeys of the gods; because in their adumbrations they seem to follow closely in the footprints of the gods.

There is another equally strong argument in proof of the truth of this matter. For if, as Psellus says, the Demons can enter and insinuate themselves into men's bodies and, being themselves spirits, can mingle and unite themselves with the spiritual fancy of men, who can say that it is beyond his belief that they can at their will impose their own image upon the fancy of the man whom they are possessing? Plutarch relates that Socrates had two familiar spirits with whom he used to converse on terms of the greatest friendship; but it was no voice from without, says Proclus, that he heard, but a breath from within which reached the organs of his senses. Yet Socrates believed that he could hear the voice sounding loud in his ears, whereas no one else, however observant and keen of hearing, could distinguish the least sound even when he placed his ear right against him. If this holds good of the deception of the hearing, it cannot be less valid in respect of the illusion of the eyes, which of all the senses are the most easily cheated. For that matter, all our

\* "Proclus." One of the most celebrated teachers of the Neo-Platonic School. Born at Byzantium, A.D. 410, and died at Athens, A.D. 485.

† "Psellus." "*Atque hunc quidem in modum daemones hi, assumpta Orcigalea, hominum animas miro artificio, miraque uersutia conturbant.*"—"De Operatione Daemonum," secundum Latinam Petri Morelli interpretationem, Paris, 1615, p. 51.

senses are equally feeble and open to delusions and glammers.

Finally, the Demons have also the power of being visible and invisible almost at the same moment; so that one man may see them and point them out to another, who, however quickly he may look, will see nothing. A similar property can be observed in air or water, as Iamblichus says; for if you pour a colour into them, or mould them to any shape, it is almost at once dispelled and dissolved.

Therefore I think that it is sufficiently clear that witches are telling no lie when they affirm for a fact that they can see their Little Masters, even though everyone else can see nothing: and that it is no idle assertion that the Demons stand by them in the Court of Justice as if they were advocates to plead their cause, although they are neither seen nor heard, nor is their presence in any way perceived by anyone else.



## CHAPTER XII

*That they are in Error who deny that Witches ought to be punished at all; and the Arguments with which they commonly Defend their Opinion are one by one Confuted.*

THERE have been those who, rather as a trial of their skill in debate than with any intention of seeking out the truth, have spoken in terms of the highest praise of the most detestable evils. Thus in Plato, Glauco defends injustice; a young man in Philostratus extols the benefits of gout, blindness and deafness; Polycrates\* praises the dropsy, Favorinus†

\* "Polycrates." An Athenian orator and sophist of some repute, a contemporary of Socrates and Isocrates. He taught first at Athens and afterwards at Cyprus. The subjects of his works are known from their mention in later writers.

the quartan ague, Lucian the palsy; and finally Erasmus spoke in such commendation of folly that the truth itself could not have been more clearly and eloquently vindicated. But there has been no one who has in this manner spoken out of such conviction and with such a desire to propagate his opinion as one who has lately with fanatical zeal (as is always the case when a man adopts an untenable attitude) undertaken the defence of witches.† And since this is an evil example to the righteous, and an encouragement to the wicked to sin with the hope of impunity; and further, because it is utterly at variance with everything that we have written in this book concerning this monstrous and deadly crime; with his good leave and that of any who may hold with him, I have thought good to deal somewhat with this matter.

First, then, he chiefly bases his Apology on the argument that witches pretend to do many things which, by their very nature, it is impossible for them to do; such as the raising up of thunder, clouds, storms, whirlwinds and other tempests, which manifestly have their origin in natural causes. Yet the contrary is not so unheard-of or rare but that it can easily be defended on the authority of not a few writers of no mean repute, but rather highly praised

† "Favorinus." A philosopher and sophist in the reign of Hadrian. He was a native of Arles in Gaul. He rose to high distinctions, and was very friendly with many literary men of the day, particularly Plutarch. Favorinus wrote a number of works upon various themes, but of these none are extant.

‡ "Defence of Witches." The reference is to Johann Weyer (1515-88), house physician to Duke William III of Cleves. His "*De praestigiis daemonum et incantationibus ac ueneficiis*" was first published at Basle in 1563. Weyer argues that witches or women who are deluded into the belief that they have made a compact with the devil cannot disturb the air and excite storms by a glance or maledictions, since such are wholly inadequate to the attainment of the end in view.

by many men. Apollonius records that he saw in India Brahmans who could at will produce rain or fair weather. The Assyrians, says Suidas, had among their Chaldeans\* a certain Julian (a sage reputed to have written the *Theurgica*) who, when the Roman army which was being led by Marcus Antoninus against the Marcomanni† was suffering from thirst, raised up a cloud from which there immediately fell rain. Arnuphus, the Egyptian wizard, in the war waged by the Romans against the Quadi,‡ is said to have obtained by his magic spells from Mercury and the other Demons of the air such a torrent of rain that it utterly confused the Quadi and compelled them to yield the victory to the Romans. Olaus Magnus, IV, 1, borrows from Saxo Grammaticus a similar account of the *Biarmenses*: "When they could no longer resist the pressure of Regner, the Danish King, against them, and were driven back to their last line of defence, they at last assailed the heavens with incantations and drew from them such a downpour of rain in the face of their enemies that they broke up and routed their whole army." Lucius Piso (*Apud Plin.* II,

54) tells that Numa often called forth lightning by his spells; and that when Tullus Hostilius tried to do the same, but did not observe the due rites and ceremonies, he was struck by the lightning and perished. Paulus Venetus§ wrote that the Tartars, a race which now occupies ancient Parthia and Scythia, could by their charms bring darkness upon the earth when they wished; and that when he was among them he barely escaped being surrounded and robbed by thieves, thanks to this art. This is similar to what Haito|| relates in his History of the Sarmatians, that a Tartar standard-bearer, seeing his line wavering and nearly broken, enveloped the enemy in such a thick darkness that they were slaughtered almost to a man. The Emperor Constantine, a man whom Zonaras testifies to have been of the most devoted orthodoxy, believed in the efficacy of magic arts to ward off from the young vines rain and winds and hail; but later this practice is specifically condemned in the books of the Imperial Archives; for, as is noted by Theodorus Balsamon¶ in the *Nomocanon*, they who use such magic arts are punishable by the law, even if they act in order to obtain

\* "Chaldeans." Cham (Ham), the son of Noah, who is identified by Vincent of Beauvais in his *"Speculum historiale"* with Zoroaster, is said to have been the first magician. He taught men that their destinies depended upon the stars, who were gods. The hosts of heaven accordingly were worshipped with divine honours. "La Chaldée fut le premier théâtre de ces égarements; et alors, 'Chaldéen, astrologue et magicien' étaient trois mots synonymes." *"Réalité de la Magie et des Apparitions,"* Paris, 1819.

† "Marcomanni." A powerful German people of the Suevic race, who originally dwelt between the Rhine and the Danube, on the banks of the Main. They afterwards extended their dominions and formed a powerful kingdom which carried on a long war during the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius.

‡ "Quadi." A German people who dwelt in the south-east of that country. They were the close allies of the Marcomanni in the long wars of these tribes against Rome.

§ "Paulus Venetus." An Augustinian eremite, born at Udine about 1368; died at Venice, June 15, 1428. His works show a wide appreciation of the scientific problems of his day. The *"De quadratura circuli"* and *"De circulis componentibus mundum"* were very famous, whilst his *"Logica duplex"* was largely used as a text-book and often reprinted.

|| "Haito." Bishop of Basle; born in 763; died March 17, 836. In 811 he was sent with others by Charlemagne to Constantinople on a diplomatic mission.

¶ "Theodorus Balsamon." A canonist of the Greek Church; born in the second half of the twelfth century at Constantinople; where he died at some date after 1195. As nomophylax from 1178 to 1183 under the Patriarch Theodosius, he had charge of all ecclesiastical trials or cases. His most famous work is his *"Scholia"* or excursus upon the *"Nomocanon"* of Photius, first published in Latin at Paris, 1561; in Greek and Latin, Paris, 1615.



some good and to ensure the fertility of the crops. If, then, such misfortunes can be averted by incantations, it will not seem absurd that they can conversely be caused. Constantius, the son of that Constantine, bore no uncertain witness as to this, when he decreed that they who by their magic arts so disturbed the elements were to be destroyed as a deadly plague. S. Augustine does not disagree with this opinion when he admits that, with God's permission, the elements can be disturbed by sorcerers (*In Psal. lxxviii*, ver. 49): and S. Thomas (*In postil. sua in Job*) subscribed to this when he affirms that the Demons can gather clouds in the air, drive them before the wind and even send out fire from them. This has been eloquently interpreted—as indeed is clarified everything that he touches, by that most eminent and honoured juriconsult Pierre Gregoire\* in his treatise on

\* "Pierre Gregoire." Pierre Gregoire, who was born at Toulouse, and had taught Civil Law at Cahors, was invited to Lorraine by Duke Charles III in order that he might preside over and direct the new Faculty of Jurisprudence in the University of Pont-à-Mousson, which had been founded in 1572. Gregoire had already won great fame throughout Europe by his profound scholarship and his complete mastery of both Civil and Canon Law. He arrived in Lorraine in 1582, and was received by the Duke with marked honour and respect. The Faculty, however, was not established without considerable opposition, since there was a good deal of jealousy, for powerful influences were at work and thus ensured vexatious delays. Pierre Gregoire died in 1617, and was buried in the Church of the Poor Clares, at the back of the High Altar, towards the Gospel side. He was as devout as he was learned, and his orthodoxy is apparent in all his writings. These are for the most part of a technical nature, and not the least valuable is a treatise composed under the name of Raymundus Rufus, demonstrating that the decrees of the Council of Trent must be promulgated and accepted throughout France; Paris, 8vo, 1553. The work to which Remy refers is a profound study of Canon Law in three volumes: "*Syntaxis artis mirabilis, in tres partes digesta, per quas de omni re pro-*

Canon Law, *Syntaxis artis mirabilis in tres partes digesta*, Lib. IV, cap. xlvi, n. 3: "And now," he says, speaking of Demons, "that we have

Our fruitful shoots set early in our  
furrows

they raise up rains and winds and tempests in the air, condensed from the fumes of the earth and the vapours of the sea (for they have no other origin), and from the midst of these they form and cast forth hurricanes, comets, thunderbolts, and many such signs and portents, in the fashioning of which they show themselves to be marvellous workmen, having regard to the material from which they are formed."

But, says my opponent, it matters not whether the belief in all this is based on the credulity of the ignorant ancients, or on the confirmation of recent authors: in any case it is the height of rashness and madness to maintain in this way that Nature is so utterly under the control of the Demons that she must perform their bidding, and so submit to their yoke that she must take from them the time and degree of her rain and thunder. I answer that no one (I think) who is in the least conversant with the works of Theologians will deny that, subject to the will of God, the Demons are concerned in such tempests in the character of an *Adrastia*, and are (as Chrysippus† (*Plut. de sera num. uindicta. Idem probl. 51*) and after him S. Basil (*In cap. 13. Esaiæ*, and *Psal. 78*) says) the executioners and ministers of divine vengeance, who visit and destroy mankind and their works with disasters and calamities. The words of

*posita multis et prope infinitis rationibus disputari aut tractari, omniumque summaria cognitio haberi potest.*" 8vo, Lyons, 1583; and Cologne, 1610.

† "Chrysippus." A Stoic philosopher born 280 B.C.; died 207. He is said to have had remarkable talent, and to have left many writings, all of which have perished.

S. Paul are well known, where he says that power over the air is given to Demons (*Ephesians*, ii, 2): and in the Apocalypse we read of the Powers of the air sending forth such thunderbolts and lightnings. Plutarch (*In tract. de vitanda usura*) also quotes Empedocles as calling the Demons "Wanderers of the air," that is, as he himself interprets it elsewhere, the occupiers of the nether air under the heavens, endowed, as Xenocrates\* says (*Apud eundem Plutarch. In Iside et Osiride*) with the greatest malignity and eagerness and boldness in doing evil. If then this office is thus delegated to them, and they are as it were commissioned to fulfil God's wrath against man by means of the very forces of Nature, it must be less difficult to believe that they have witches as their associates in this work: not for the sake of the help that they can give in performing what everybody knows that the Demons can do without the need of any help, but so that the Demon may make them more prone to do evil and injury, and by their complicity more and more abandoned to all crime. He cheats them into the belief that they have some marvellous power to perform these difficult and miraculous tasks, and so drives them on and on, fatiguing them with the heavy burden of the exacting and tedious duties which he imposes on them. For so it is that this benevolent Master refreshes his disciples with perpetual hardship, labour and molestation.

Nor should our belief in this matter be at all strained by any consideration of the absurdity and incompatibility with natural laws of the supposition that, notwithstanding their solid weight, men are lifted up and borne on high through the air. For we freely

admit at the start that these things have no part with the laws of Nature; but that such prodigies and portents manifest themselves in spite of and to the amazement of Nature, so that anyone who writes to ascribe them to natural causes might just as well try to touch the heavens with his finger. For it is not fitting to think according to the standards of human reasoning and judgement of matters which manifestly surpass all the bounds and limits set by Nature. Simon Magus (according to the testimony of S. Ambrose in the *Hexameron* and Pope Clement in the *Itinerarium*), when he was striving with S. Peter the Apostle, performed among other miracles the following: he made himself appear to fly away as if upon wings. Hegesippus (III, 2) writes that he did this in the sight of Nero, but that at the prayers of the Apostle he fell and broke his leg near Aricia. I pass over what Pausanias, in his description of Attica, relates of the poet Musæus, how he had been given by Boreas the gift of flight; what S. Basil (*In orat. funeb. Greg. Nazian.*) says concerning the Argive Pegasus; what Herodotus and, after him, S. Gregory the Theologian† (*Epist.* 22, *ad Basilium Magnum*) tell of the Scythian Abaris, that he used to ride with the greatest swiftness through the air upon an arrow given him by Apollo. For these seem to be fables rather than historical truths; although it is possible that they may have happened with the crafty help of the Cacodemon, whom all know that the Pagans in the delusion of their impious errors worshipped under the name of Apollo, Aeolus, and the other Gods. For this is no more difficult of belief than that which more recent authors have written concerning Antidius,‡ Bishop

\* "Xenocrates." Of Chalcedon, born 396 B.C.; died 314. He became president of the Academy even before the death of Speusippus, who was then a complete invalid. Xenocrates reckoned Aether among the material elements of the world.

† "S. Gregory the Theologian." S. Gregory of Nazianzus.

‡ "Antidius." Rather S. Antidius, Bishop of Besançon, Martyr, who was slain by the Vandals. Feast, June 25. It does not appear how this silly legend originated.

of Tours; that he rode upon the Devil so that he might reach Rome with the greater speed and there as soon as possible recall the Pope from some evil undertaking. And even if these stories are not true, we have not far to seek; for we know that, as the Gospels relate, the man possessed with an unclean spirit broke the chains and fetters with which he was bound, and was carried by Satan into the wilderness: nay, that Jesus Himself was taken up by him in the Holy Land, and set upon the pinnacle of the Temple. For although it is no part of a devout Christian to inquire why this was done, it would be blasphemous to question that it was done, since we are told of it so plainly in the Holy Gospel. If therefore it once happened to Him who was the vanquisher and conqueror of Satan to be carried through the air by him, why should we be so slow to believe that men, who are so often vulnerable to his attacks, especially those who voluntarily surrender themselves into his power, can at his pleasure be lifted up and borne away through the air? Finally, if it is desired to pursue this inquiry beyond the evidence of the ancient Annals and of more recent history, what is more common in our own days than the frequent and persistent assertions of witches with regard to this matter, confirmed by the testimony of men who constantly maintain that, not in sleep or with their senses bewitched, but with their own eyes they have seen witches fall from the clouds, or clinging in perplexity to the tops of trees or houses, or lying bemused upon the ground? Nor is this mere street-corner gossip; but it is evidence given upon the most solemn oath in a Court of Justice, as we have more than once shown in this work. Away then with those who would make Nature the standard and rule of all things, so that they think that nothing can happen which does not conform to her methods and limits! For thus they constringe the hands and circumscribe the might of God, who

forces even the stars to obey His laws; and will not believe that He can do anything except what is credible according to nature. For this is to think too grossly and materially of His works, and, as they say, to render Jove utterly destitute. "Therefore," says Lucius in Apuleius (*Golden Ass*, Book I), "I think nothing impossible; but as the fates have decreed, so do all things happen for mortals." For to all men there happen many marvellous and almost impossible experiences which, when told to the ignorant, cannot be believed.

Again, it is argued that it is only in their thoughts (which should in no way be amenable to punishment) that witches are concerned in these disturbances of the elements; and this is made another plea for their pardon and impunity; as if only the actual results, but not the evil devisings which lead to them (as Cicero says in the *Pro Milone*), ought to be regarded as punishable. But what is this but an open defence of the blind and impure passions of the heart, in defiance of the express pronouncement of the Gospel (*S. Matthew xii*), which tells us that the evil thoughts of the heart are the gravest sin in the sight of God? In the last clause of the Decalogue we are warned that they who enviously and covetously imagine some evil device, even if they do not carry their thought into deeds, must nevertheless not be held guiltless, seeing that they have sinned in their hearts. Can the law regard an accessory to a fact as innocent of that fact? But it may be objected that this argument is not concerned with those punishments which the Theologians leave to the secret vengeance of God (Acts of God), but only with those that are instituted as an example by human laws (the Blood Penalty), of which they who have themselves admitted nothing which can be taken as evidence of their guilt can in no way be deemed worthy: since thought alone can do no hurt unless it is followed by some action; nor even the attempt itself,



unless it results in some injury. Let us concede this. Let it be granted that human law allows some things which are condemned by Divine law. Yet there is no lack in sacred law of the most clearly expressed sanctions for the punishment of the will to sin with the same severity as the actual deed. The Edicts of Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius laid down the severest penalties for the man who planned to contract a marriage by force against the will of those who were concerned, even if he did not succeed in his design. He who buys poison with the intention of giving it to his father, although he fails to do so, is held liable to the penalty under the *Lex Cornelia De Sicariis*. He who solicits another man's wife or would seduce her into adultery, although he may not have effected his purpose, is nevertheless extraordinarily punished on account of the abominable lusts of his heart. The man who has even thought of ravishing a holy virgin has to pay the penalty for the actual deed. In short, where any atrocious and grave crime is concerned, it is enough for a man to have conceived the intention for him to be punished for the fact. It was perhaps for this reason that in our own time the Senate of Paris judged an eminently noble man to be guilty of High Treason because he had only conceived the idea of assassinating the king; in spite of the fact that he had immediately repented of the notion, and had himself laid information against himself. Now what more abominable thought or concept of an evil mind, what greater wickedness and depravity of the human heart can there be than not only to revolve in the mind and plot and desire that which all other men regard with horror and apprehension—such as thunders and lightnings, the ruin and destruction of the crops, the violent agitation and even uprooting of trees, and the devastation and spoliation of wide and fertile tracts of land; but with might and main, by day and by night, to strive to bring these things

about, and to wait upon, support, and as far as they can assist the Demons whom they believe to be the instigators of these upheavals; and in a word to use their every effort and endeavour to please them alone as much as they possibly can, as if in the knowledge that both God and all men were detestable to them? Such are the sins of thought which, according to S. Basil, *De vera uirginitate*, should be judged not merely as fancies, but as facts accomplished in the soul; and should, as soon as they manifest themselves as the presence of fire is indicated by smoke, be immediately quelled and extinguished; and are deserving of the heavier penalty, in that there is often more harm in a secretly conceived sin than in an openly committed one. Finally, if a bare guilty thought must by no means be considered penal, and if innocence is sufficiently preserved if you

But nurse a secret rancour in the breast;

then, I suppose, all the provisions of the law are invalid, which decree the most terrible punishment of the flames for blasphemous opinions concerning God and religion, if they are but laid bare and discovered by word of mouth! Those decrees of the Emperors and Jurists are, forsooth, savage and bloodthirsty, which assigned the same penalty and punishment to not only the accomplices but even the accessories of a crime, as to its actual perpetrators!

Another plea is put forward on the ground of the feebleness of the witches' age and sex, a consideration which, it is claimed, should always be weighed most carefully in judging any person's degree of culpability; and thus the heinousness of this crime in particular should be overlooked, since it proceeds from a condition of mind for which Nature alone is responsible. But to argue in this way is to bring a very heavy charge against Nature, who is on the contrary wise in all she does.

For all those who are infected with this pestilence of witchcraft are women or of an advanced and decrepit age; for (though this is certainly rarer) the Demon holds men equally bound by this kind of allegiance. And although it is true that many women of extreme old age are taken up for this crime, even in such cases the sin is one of long standing of which they have usually been guilty ever since the time of their youth. But even if my opponents' contention were true, who is there who does not know that neither sex nor age is regarded by the law as any excuse for its infringement, and that no offence can be condoned on the score of human weakness? God has spoken with no uncertain voice: "A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death" (*Leviticus* xx, 27). And through fear of the law by which Saul punished witchcraft with death, the Witch of Endor tried to deny that she had any skill in the matter. It is, then, apparent that without any regard or respect for their age or sex the Law of God demands the punishment of those who exercise such illicit and forbidden arts. Even the New Testament, the teaching of which is more moderate and merciful, lays it down with the utmost severity that every branch which abides not in Christ shall be cast out and thrown into the fire: every branch, that is, without exception (*S. John* xv). And if we are forbidden to make distinctions where the laws allow of none, how much more are we forbidden to do so in the case of the Gospel, whose majesty is above the law, and to add anything to which or to take anything away from it is a sin that must be expiated in eternal fire (*Deut.* iv, 2, *Rev.* xxii, 19).

The most ancient laws of the Romans punished with death not only men who were found guilty of sorcery (for Tacitus, *Annales* II, records that Publius Martius and Pituanus were thus capitally punished, the former of whom the Consuls ordered to be put to

death outside the Esquiline Gate, and the latter to be hurled from the Tarpeian Rock, because they were found guilty of sorcery; and Ammianus Marcellinus, XXVI, tells that the charioteer Hilarius was condemned to death by Apronianus the *Praetor Urbanus* because he had given his son to a sorcerer to be trained in his art; and that when he escaped from the lictors who had insufficiently secured him and took refuge in a neighbouring temple, he was nevertheless dragged out and made to undergo his penalty), but meted out the same punishment even to women; as Valerius Maximus (VI, 3) tells us was done in the case of Publicia and Licinia, who were hanged by the neck for this crime, together with seventy Romans. Nor were the Romans alone in inflicting this severe punishment upon women. There is the well-known judgement passed by the Athenians upon the Lemnian enchantress which, though it was indeed precipitate, is a very clear indication of the loathing in which this crime was then held (*Demosthenes, In prima contra Aristogit. orat.*). For on the mere information of her handmaid and without trying the matter any further, they delivered her up to the cruellest of deaths. There were besides Eriphyle, Mycale, Canidia, Erichtho, Sagana, Dipsas, and many other witches in ancient times\*;

\* "Ancient times." Eriphyle betrayed her husband, the seer Amphiaraus, to Polynices for a golden necklace and was slain by her son Alcmaeon. There is a reference in the "*De Arte Amandi*," III, 13, upon which Borchardus Crippingius glosses: "*Amphiaraus Oecleii filium dicit, augurandi arte peritissimum, qui adolescens Argonautas secutus est.*"

For the witch Mycale, see Ovid, "*Metamorphoseon*," XII, 262-4:

"Orio

*Mater erat Mycale: quam deduxisse canendo  
Saepe reluctanti constabat cornua Lunae."*

And Seneca, "*Hercules Oetaeus*," 525-7:

"*Hoc docta Mycale Thessalas docuit nurus,  
Unam inter omnes Luna quam sequitur magam,  
Astris relictis.*"

but not one of the many writers who have handed down their memory to our times has ever been so indulgent as to offer their sex or anility as an excuse for their pestilent and criminal lives.

But let us grant them this plea. Let it be supposed that through human weakness their foothold is so slippery that they cannot but fall. Even so, what madness it would be to condone in them a crime with which they must be contaminated for as long as they live, to the greatest despite of God and men! Indeed it would be like allowing mad dogs to live, although everyone knows that they are incurable, simply because it was through no fault or blame of their own that they became mad. The wise man, says Seneca (Lib. II, *De Clementia*, cap. ultimo), does not attempt to cure the irremediable, but only that which can be cured. A good farmer does not trouble to prop up those trees which he knows cannot be cured of their deterioration or crookedness by any care that he can give them. As for the taint of witchcraft, we have more than once shown that once it has taken hold it can hardly be shaken off except by death. So far as I know, indeed, there has not hitherto been a

single one of the many thousands whom Satan has caught in the coils of sorcery who has freed herself from them by any other means than either a forced or a spontaneous confession before the Judge, followed by the expiation of her death: so fast a hold does that Master keep upon his subjects. The Imperial Laws forbade any remission of punishment in the case of those whom such mercy would probably encourage in their crimes, rather than induce them to amend their lives. And Plato in his *Protagoras* says that the purpose of punishing the guilty was not to avenge their crimes (for who can undo that which is done?), but to serve as a deterrent to prevent one who has sinned from committing that crime again. Then what sufficient argument can be adduced to show that such scum who vow eternal allegiance to the Devil should not be put to death with every torment as soon as their guilt is known? For if a thing becomes a danger to the public, and this danger cannot be removed without loss to him who owns this thing, yet it is just that he should bear that loss in the interests of the public; for the peace and safety of the public must be the first consideration. Publícola justified himself in this way for his action in levelling private houses to the ground. And many men have retired prematurely from a most honourable office because they knew that they had become a cause of offence to their fellow-citizens, as Cicero (*De Divinatione*, II) tells us that Scipio and Figulus did. Not a few have been rewarded for their courage and masterfulness by ostracism, because it did not seem possible by any other means to ensure the peace and prosperity of their people. This Plutarch tells us was the fate of Pericles and Aristides the Just.

And yet we find those who would defend old women, who are a menace by reason of the threats and curses they daily give voice to, are a danger by reason of the evil bewitchments which

Farnaby glosses: "'Docta.' *Ueneficiorum et magiae perita. 'Thessalas.' Mulieres Thessalas incantamentis famosas.*"

Canidia. The sorceress often mentioned by Horace. "Epodes," III, viii; also V and XVII, et alibi. Sagana is the companion of Canidia at the famous sabbat on the Esquiline, "Sermorum," I, viii.

Erichtho was a Thessalian witch consulted by Pompey. Lucan, "Pharsalia," VI. Cf. Ovid, "Heroides," Sappho Phaoni, 139-40:

"*Illuc mentis inops, ut quam furialis Erichtho Impulit, in collo crine iacente, feror.*"

Dipsas is described by Ovid, "Amores," I, viii:

"*Ille magas artes, Æeque carmina novit,  
Inque caput liquidas arte recurvat aquas . . .  
Hanc ego nocturnas uersam uolitare per  
umbras  
Suspitor, et pluma corpus anile regi.*"



inevitably follow upon their threats, and finally would be revered on account of the miraculous power of healing with which they alone are said to be endowed! There are those who maintain that such witches ought not to be punished for their many and great crimes and abominations! What is this but to set up the wolves' lair in the midst of the sheep pen? I have known whole villages contemplate migrating to another place for no other reason than that their magistrates used too much leniency in leaving witches unpunished, and thus encouraging them to even greater licence in ill-doing. But it may be argued that there is no sufficient proof to warrant bringing these women to trial on so grave a charge: that it is against all law and justice to give such weight to a popular fear or a scare bred of an uncertain rumour, as to think it necessary to put a fellow-creature to an ignominious death in order to allay that fear. I answer that there can be no question of calumny in these cases; for no one can quote a single instance of anyone being put to death for this crime who has not first been manifestly proved guilty either by the clear evidence of witnesses or by her own persistent confession up to the time of her death.

But now they fall back upon by far their strongest line of defence; which is that the law does not punish a man except for a crime which he had wittingly and intentionally committed; and that nothing could so completely preclude any such intention than the forcible restraint which the Demon places upon the liberty of those whom he thus makes his slaves; for there can be no doubt about the cunning contrivances and deceptions and illusions by which he so seduces them; so that it is scarcely in the power of anyone, especially when their age or sex or country simplicity handicaps their intelligence, to resist his wily attempts. But tell me, pray! is any crime ever committed except at his suggestion

and instigation? "But by the envy of the devil death came into the world: And they follow him that are of his side" (*Wisdom* ii, 24, 25). Yet has anyone ever been known to be excused the penalty of the law simply because he pleaded that he was tempted by the Devil to do that with which he was charged? This would amount, in one word, to the overturning from its foundations of the whole Christian teaching, by which we are warned to hope always in God, for He is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able (*I. Cor.* x.). And lest we should become slothful and negligent in the belief that He will protect us without our taking any thought, He has told us He will only be our Captain and Defender if we in our turn obey Him and wait upon His will, if we take up the arms of an unshaken faith, if we resist our formidable foe, and if we boldly and strenuously wage battle as far as in us lies (*Ephes.* vi.; *I. Pet.* v.). And because many sins may be committed through ignorance of who is our adversary, and the beginning of victory is to know and understand his strength and his devices; therefore He diligently warns us with what sort of an enemy we will have to do: namely, with one who never fails in his malevolence and desire to harm us, in his strength and vigilance, or in any of the weapons of warfare; who, like a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour; who, if force will not avail him, changes his lion's skin for that of a fox; who masks himself as a good Angel the more easily to impose upon us, deluding his enemies by appearing as one of themselves. With such a Captain, then, and with such faithful warnings and counsels, we can keep victory far from our mighty and cunning foe, so long as we do not fail ourselves. For although the Devil does not sleep, neither does He that watches over Israel slumber or sleep (*Psalms* cxxi). Therefore it is the more amazing to find men so diffident, nay so

impious, as to yield the issue of the fight to him by whose will it was begun, and to surrender themselves as if it were necessary for all who are thus attacked to be conquered; and not rather to believe, as S. Gregory has it, that all Christians ought of right to be invulnerable to Satan's darts, unless of their own accord they leave their citadel and throw away their shield and rush naked upon his weapons, or rather unless they voluntarily desert to his camp. For why did our Saviour, when He lived on earth as our pattern, bid Satan to depart when he tempted Him, if it was not to teach us that we might do likewise in complete faith, with the assurance that we shall win the same victory if we fight under His leadership and under His banner. Therefore we may bid the murderer depart, and say with the Prophet Jeremy: "The Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one!" (xx. 11). For as often as the Devil is repulsed, so often does he return to the attack and renew the combat; and more than once we read in history how he repeatedly but vainly launched his crafty attacks upon those devout Fathers who retired into the wilderness for the sake of their religion. Then it is not wonderful that, once he had a man in bondage by any means, he exacts from him a heavy rate of interest, by the accumulation of which he becomes fettered and shackled so strictly that he must perforce yield himself vanquished. For after a man has been thoroughly smirched and befouled with debauchery, lust, theft, murder and other crimes, the Devil at last awards him the crown of witchcraft, thus (as the saying is) putting butter upon bacon, according to the will of God, who punishes sin with sin, blindness with blindness, and ignorance with ignorance. And just as CHRIST chooses His soldier, as S. Ambrose says (*De beata uita*), so does the Devil buy a willing slave and subject him to his dark sway; for he can bring no one under the yoke of his bondage who has not first sold

himself to him by his sins. They must therefore blame it on themselves, who thus voluntarily become involved in the toils of the Devil; since they have themselves turned away from God before He turned His back on them (*Hosea ix*): and they must acknowledge that it is a just judgement of God by which they are delivered and given over to so hard a service of Satan, as S. Paul writes (*Romans i*). And let them not have recourse to the plea which is commonly urged when all other legitimate defence has failed; that the unfortunate ought rather to be lifted up and set on their feet, than persecuted and thrust deeper into misfortune. For there can be no mercy for those who have of their own will run into misfortune, and have, as it is said, cut off their own legs.

Again, it is claimed that there can be no true compact between a man and a Demon, since they can have no community of understanding or speech with each other; and that even if they can enter into some contract together, yet the stipulated conditions of it are so difficult, absurd and unjust that they cannot be considered as binding. These arguments would do very well if this were merely a matter of settling a legal dispute, in which it could be shown that certain clauses of a contract involved the public danger, or that they were of a shameful nature, or that they were deliberately and maliciously designed to cheat one of the parties, or that they were such as no one could fulfil however much he might desire to do so, or were invalid for some other such reason. For such clauses could, I think, be deemed frivolous and ruled out of court, if ever such proceedings were instituted by the Demon, as we read in Bartolus\* that

\* "Bartolus." This famous jurist was born in 1313 at Sassoferrato, Umbria; and died at Perugia in 1356. His works were collected, ten volumes, Lyons, 1544. Dumoulin terms him "le premier et le coryphée des interprètes au droit."

he brought an action against the Virgin Mother (*In quaest. uentilata coram D.N. Jesu-Christo*). But when the whole compact is formed by the way of temptation and suggestion, in which it would be ridiculous to consider whether the parties to the agreement have the necessary ability to fulfil its conditions, then it seems to me that they but waste their labour who try to base any argument upon non-consent, or repugnance, or difficulty. And that such contracts can be drawn up in correct legal terms and phraseology has been clearly proved where we showed that the Demons have the faculty of speech, by which they can make known their wishes, and by questioning and answering can determine the stipulations of their contracts (*Genesis* iii).

Moreover, if any of the conditions are beyond the power of the man to fulfil, as being quite outside his natural abilities, then the Demon with his great powers stands by him and willingly helps him. Lastly, a base or dishonourable clause in the pact no more invalidates it than a robber is held back from his plunder, or a harlot from her trade, by the atrocity of the deed, or by any bashful consideration for her good name. Woe therefore (to use the words of Isaiah\*) to them who have made a covenant with death, and with hell are at agreement! A covenant (says S. Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, II) formed by the pestilent association of men with Demons; a pact of unfaithful and disloyal friendship.

Woe also to those who would palliate the odium of so horrible and execrable a crime, and would diminish its punishment on the plea of fear, age, sex, imprudence, and the like, which

no sane man would dare to consider as grounds for mercy in even less abominable crimes! For what is this, if it is not (as S. Paul says, I. Cor. x; *Rom.* xiii) openly to tempt God? It is, indeed, blasphemy (says Cassiodorus, Lib. 9 in *edict Alarici regis*) for Judges to deal leniently with those who are liable to the just punishment of Heaven. This is to delay the coming of His Kingdom; for nothing can so firmly establish it as the routing, overthrow and destruction of all His enemies, together with Satan, who is their Captain. When the wicked is slain, says S. Ambrose, *De Paradiso*, II, Christ is received: when an abomination is destroyed, sanctity is hallowed. Such men act in the worst possible way for the security and peace of the human race; for, as Pythagoras (*apud Stobaeum*) said, they who do not restrain the wicked wish to wrong the righteous. Finally, they call evil good, and good evil, and put darkness for light, as Isaiah says, and altogether take away all distinction and judgement between virtue and vice, reward and punishment.

For my part, who have been so long and continuously exercised and confirmed in the examination of witches, I shall not fear to proclaim freely and openly my opinion of them, and to do all in my power to bring the very truth to light: namely, that their lives are so notoriously befouled and polluted by so many blasphemies, sorceries, prodigious lusts and flagrant crimes, that I have no hesitation in saying that they are justly to be subjected to every torture and put to death in the flames; both that they may expiate their crimes with a fitting punishment, and that its very awfulness may serve as an example and a warning to others.

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\* "Isaiah," xxviii, 15.